

White House Faults GOP's Letter to Iran's Leaders



White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest speaks about the Republican senators who sent a letter to Iranian leaders during the daily briefing at the White House in Washington, Monday, March 9, 2015. The White House on Monday sharply rebuked nearly four dozen Republican senators who sent a letter to Iranian leaders, characterizing the correspondence as an illegitimate interference in President Barack Obama's foreign policy. (AP Photo/Susan Walsh)

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Official: 40 passengers injured in N. Carolina truck-train crash

E. P. DALESIO
M. WAGGONER
Associated Press
RALEIGH, North Carolina
(AP) — Transportation officials say 40 passengers were injured when a train collided with a tractor-trailer that was stuck on the tracks in North Carolina. State Department of Transportation officials said 25 people were taken to Halifax Regional Medical Center by bus and 15 by ambulance after the collision, which happened about noon Monday. They said none of the injuries appeared to be

life-threatening. A bus will take another 173 passengers who weren't injured to Richmond, Virginia. Halifax County law-enforcement officials say the collision toppled the Amtrak train's engine onto its side. They say the first two cars of the train toppled after the crash. Officials say the second car that derailed was a baggage car. An eyewitness says the tractor-trailer driver was trying to make a difficult right-hand turn. She says the driver jumped out of the truck before the crash. □



Train passenger Alyssa Coleman, right, and her little sister, Viara Hinton, are helped off of a derailed Amtrak train by workers on scene, Monday, March 9, 2015, in Halifax County, N.C. Coleman said she was traveling home to Virginia. The passenger train hit a tractor-trailer that stalled on the railroad tracks, toppling the engine onto its side and injuring several people, officials said Monday.

(AP Photo/The Daily Herald, Erin Carson)

Court documents: Wisconsin shooting victim was impulsive

TODD RICHMOND
Associated Press
MADISON, Wis. (AP) — An unarmed black man fatally shot by a white Wisconsin police officer tended to be an impulsive risk-taker and faced a choice between a middle-class lifestyle and the gang world, according to court documents. The file connected to 19-year-old Tony Robinson's conviction last year for armed robbery shows he was diagnosed with attention-deficit disorder and anxiety and depression. The documents were contained in a report by a state Department of Corrections agent. Madison police officer Matt Kenny shot Robinson on Friday evening while investigating a call that the young man was jumping in and out of traffic and had assaulted someone. The officer heard a disturbance and forced his way into an apartment where Robinson had gone.

Authorities said Kenny fired after Robinson assaulted him. The shooting is the latest in a series of incidents involving white police officers killing unarmed black men over the last year, including in Ferguson, Missouri, where officer Darren Wilson shot unarmed 18-year-old Michael Brown in August. That shooting sparked weeks of unrest. Madison Police Chief Mike Koval, who is white, has tried to strike a conciliatory tone with the city's black community, calling Robinson's death a tragedy and even going so far as praying with Robinson's grandmother in her driveway hours after the shooting. On Monday, he wrote on his blog that he was sorry Robinson died and hoped his family could find forgiveness in their hearts. "The police are part of this community — and we share this sense of loss," Koval wrote. □

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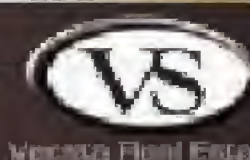
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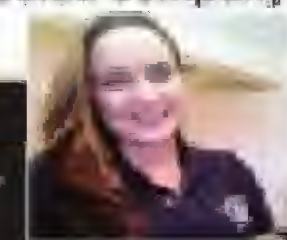
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GOP Letter

PETER BAKER

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WASHINGTON - The White House on Monday sharply rebuked nearly four dozen Republican senators who sent a letter to Iranian leaders just as nuclear negotiations reach a pivotal moment, characterizing the correspondence as an illegitimate interference in

House press secretary, said the senators were trying to "essentially throw sand in the gears here" in a way that went beyond the role that was envisioned for Congress in foreign policy by the authors of the Constitution. He said the White House wanted to send a "forceful" rebuttal to the letter because it seemed intent on torpedoing the talks.

"Writing a letter like this that appeals to the hard-

The letter, drafted by Sen. Tom Cotton of Arkansas and signed by most of the Republican majority in the Senate, suggested to Iran that reaching a deal with Obama might not stick because Congress would not approve it.

"The next president could revoke such an executive agreement with the stroke of a pen, and future Congresses could modify the terms of the agreement at any time," said the letter, which was disclosed earlier by Bloomberg News.

Cotton said on Monday that he had drafted the letter because Iran's leaders might not understand the U.S. constitutional system.

Unlike a treaty, which would require a two-thirds Senate vote for ratification, the agreement Obama and other world leaders are negotiating with Iran would not automatically go to Congress, but members of both parties are seeking a vote.

Cotton said the terms of the emerging deal made it too risky and noted that a Republican president succeeding Obama could decide not to honor it. Speaking on Fox News, Cotton noted that the agreement under discussion would expire after 10 years.

That alone would "make this deal unacceptable, dangerous to the United States and dangerous to the world."

Cotton said he hoped that Democratic senators might also sign the letter. "And for that matter, I'd encourage Hillary Clinton to join us in saying that Congress must approve any nuclear deal with Iran," Cotton said. □

Obama levies sanctions on seven Venezuelan officials

**JULIE PACE,
JOSHUA GOODMAN**

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama slapped sanctions on seven Venezuelan officials Monday, accusing them of perpetrating human rights violations and public corruption in the socialist-governed South American nation.

The individuals all come from the top echelon of the state security apparatus that was responsible for cracking down on anti-government protests that rocked Venezuela last year and for pursuing charges against leading opponents.

"Corrupt actions by Venezuelan government officials deprive Venezuela of needed economic resources that could be invested in the Venezuelan people and used to spur economic growth," Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew said in a statement. "These actions also undermine the public trust in democratic institutions and the human rights to which Venezuelan citizens are entitled."

The sanctions come after the U.S. Congress passed legislation late last year authorizing penalties that would freeze the assets and ban visas for anyone accused of carrying out acts of violence or violating the human rights of those opposing Venezuela's government.

Diosdado Cabello, the powerful head of Venezuela's National Assembly, blasted the sanctions as further evidence of U.S. attempts to sow unrest in the oil-rich nation. He said President Nicolas Maduro would personally denounce the U.S. actions when he, Obama and regional leaders travel to Panama next month to attend the Summit of the Americas.

"Mr. Obama, you and your imperialists are going to have to sanction lots of Venezuelans who are willing to give their life to defend the Bolivarian revolution and the project started by Comandante Hugo Chavez," Cabello told a rally of government supporters.

Maximilien Sanchez Arvelaiz, the top Venezuelan diplomat in Washington, was called to Caracas for immediate consultations Monday. The two nations haven't exchanged ambassadors since 2010.

Tensions between the U.S. and Venezuela have been on the rise in recent months.

Last summer, the State Department imposed a travel ban on Venezuelan officials accused of abuses during street protests that left dozens of people dead. And last week, Venezuela gave the U.S. two weeks to slash its diplomatic mission there to less than 20 percent of its current size. □



Tom Cotton, R-Ark., speaks in North Little Rock, Ark. Forty-seven Republican senators warned Monday that any agreement the Obama administration strikes with Iran to limit Tehran's nuclear program may be short-lived unless Congress approves the deal. (AP Photo/Danny Johnston)

President Barack Obama's foreign policy. The letter, signed by 47 Republican senators and addressed to "leaders of the Islamic Republic of Iran," suggested that the Iranian leaders might not understand the American system and warned them that any deal Obama and other world leaders might reach on the future of its nuclear program would be reversible without congressional approval.

Josh Earnest, the White

liners in Iran is frankly just the latest in a strategy, a partisan strategy, to undermine the president's ability to conduct foreign policy and advance our national interests around the world," Earnest said. He linked it to the decision by House Speaker John A. Boehner to invite Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel without consulting the White House to denounce a possible Iran deal in a speech to Congress last week.



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Univ. of Oklahoma president: Frat members 'disgraceful'



George Henderson, left, professor emeritus, joins students at the University of Oklahoma to protest a fraternity's racist comments on March 9, 2015 in Norman, Okla. University President David Boren lambasted members of Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity on Monday who participated in a racist chant caught on video, calling them disgraceful and their behavior reprehensible, and ordered that their house be vacated by midnight Tuesday.

(AP Photo/The Oklahoman, Steve Sisney)

SEAN MURPHY
Associated Press
NORMAN, Oklahoma (AP) — The president of the University of Oklahoma lambasted members of a fraternity who participated in a racist chant caught on video and ordered that

they vacate their house by Tuesday night. President David Boren said he was sickened and couldn't eat or sleep after learning about the video Sunday afternoon. It shows several people on a bus participating in a chant

that included a racial slur, referenced lynching and indicated black students would never be admitted to OU's chapter of Sigma Alpha Epsilon. Boren attended a pre-dawn rally organized by students and lambasted

those fraternity members as "disgraceful" and called their behavior "reprehensible." He said the university was looking into a range of punishment, including expulsion. "This is not who we are," Boren said at a midday news conference. "I'd be glad if they left. I might even pay the bus fare for them." The national fraternity released a statement Sunday night saying it was "embarrassed" by the "unacceptable and racist" behavior. It also said it would close the local chapter. Boren later released a statement saying members had until midnight Tuesday to remove their personal belongings from the fraternity house. A fraternity is an organization of male college students in the U.S. A link to the video was posted by OU Unheard, a black student group on campus, after someone anonymously called it to the group's attention, communications director Alexis Hall said Monday. "We immediately needed to share that with the OU student body," said Hall, a junior. "For stu-

dents to say they're going to lynch an entire group of people. ... It's disgusting." It's unclear who recorded the video, when it was recorded and who initially posted it online. Hill said a link to the video was sent Sunday afternoon to the student group, which formed in the fall in response to a fatal police shooting in Ferguson, Missouri. The video appears to have been taken on a charter bus, with at least one of the chanting students wearing a tuxedo. "I was shocked they were just doing it openly on the bus, like they were proud of it," said Jared Scarborough, a junior in construction science. "From the chant you could tell they had done it before. It wasn't a first-time thing. And it was everybody. And the fist-pumping." The University of Oklahoma, located in the southern Oklahoma City suburb of Norman, has about 27,000 students, about 5 percent of whom are black. The fraternity system is largely segregated. □



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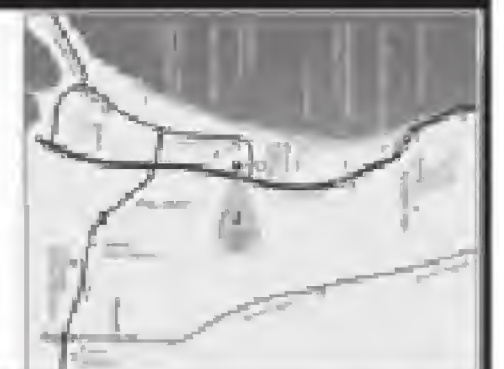
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American Living:

Roadmap to how many people could lose health insurance

MARGOT SANGER-KATZ
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So how many people in how many states could be affected by the big Supreme Court case about Obamacare's insurance subsidies? Good question. A combination of data problems and legal ambiguities make some basic facts about the case difficult to summarize easily. Last week, news media coverage included widely ranging numbers of people who could lose their insurance and where they live. Here's why it's hard to estimate.

We don't know how many states a decision will affect. The court case, *King v. Burwell*, concerns whether



Supporters of the Affordable Care Act outside the Supreme Court in Washington. Determining the number of people that could be affected by the big Supreme Court case about Obamacare's insurance subsidies is hard to estimate. (Doug Mills/The New York Times)

subsidies can go to insurance purchasers in every state or just those where a marketplace was established by a state government. If the court rules that

only state marketplace customers can keep getting the money, it's not entirely obvious which states will qualify. There are 13 states, along

with the District of Columbia, that have submitted applications to manage their own marketplaces and are now doing all the work that the health law and regulations say they must have a state-based marketplace. Everyone agrees that the court case will have no impact there.

There are three states - New Mexico, Nevada, and Oregon - that also had their plans to run their marketplaces conditionally approved. But those states failed to set up all the exchange-running functions and now rely substantially on the federal government to help them. That leaves 34 states that are considered part of the federal marketplace system. The briefs and oral arguments before the Supreme Court used the number 34. But the cases actually date to 2014, when the state lineup was slightly different. And the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals found, in a similar case, that 36 states could be affected by the ruling. How the three in-between states are treated will most likely depend on the details of the court's ruling and the administration's regulatory response. There are also optimists who think that, with some regulatory tinkering, the Obama administration could wave through a few more states that are running most of their exchange functions but have not officially applied to become state-based. That means there is a slight chance that the decision could come to affect fewer than 34 states. To reflect that uncertainty, The Upshot has been say-

ing that the case could affect residents of up to 37 states, though many experts think that 34 states is the most likely number.

The sign-up period just ended last month. The administration has published a total number of people who selected health plans - 8.8 million in 37 states - but not the number of them in each state or the percentage in each state who are getting subsidies to help them pay their premiums. Using older estimates of both things and doing a little math, the Kaiser Family Foundation calculated that about 7.5 million people in 34 states have picked plans and qualify for subsidies.

Picking a plan is not exactly the same thing as having insurance and getting an Obamacare subsidy. Last year, about 15 percent of the people who signed up either never paid their premiums or dropped out of coverage after a few months. The dropout rate will probably be lower this year, but experts expect that the number of people actually enrolled in coverage will be smaller than the sign-up numbers.

To reflect that uncertainty, The Upshot has been saying that about 7 million people could lose subsidies if the court rules against the government, but other estimates are defensible. Some people who would lose subsidies if the court rules against the government would immediately drop coverage. Others would keep paying for insurance even if their premiums went way up. If the subsidies disappear this year, there will be huge price spikes for subsidized customers this year. □

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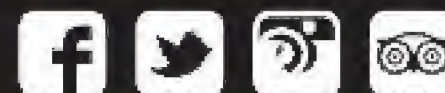


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Us Financial Front:

Disputing credit report could get easier under new rules



New York AG Eric Schneiderman speaks during a news conference, in New York. The three largest credit reporting agencies will change the way they handle records in a major revamp long sought by consumer advocates. The changes were announced Monday, March 9, 2015, after talks between Equifax, Experian, TransUnion and Schneiderman.

(AP Photo/Bebeto Matthews)

M. CHAPMAN
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Disputing a mistake on your credit report could get easier and the effects of medical debt less severe under changes being made by the three largest credit-reporting agencies. The Monday announcement by the agencies — Equifax, Experian and TransUnion — comes after months of negotiations between the companies and New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman. Consumer advocates have long sought a revamp that would reduce errors on credit report and make correcting them easier. Data collected by the agencies on hundreds of millions of people are used to create credit scores, which can determine who gets a loan and how much interest is paid on it. "The nation's largest reporting agencies have a

responsibility to investigate and correct errors on consumers' credit reports. Under the changes announced Monday, people who contest items in their credit reports will receive more information concerning those disputes, including instructions on what they can do if they don't like the answer they get. In a bid to increase accuracy, medical debts won't be reported until after a 180-day waiting period to allow time for insurance payments to be applied. The agencies agreed to remove from credit reports previously reported medical collections that have been or are being paid by insurance companies. This comes after a move in August by Fair Isaac Corp., the company behind the commonly used FICO credit score, in which it announced that medical debt would have a smaller effect on the score.

It also said at the time that debts that go to collection agencies and are repaid wouldn't count against a consumer's FICO score. Equifax, Experian and TransUnion are honing their focus to better handle disputes with consumers and to help victims of identity theft and fraud.

The three credit reporting agencies will jettison reports on debts that didn't arise from a contract or agreement with the consumer, such as tickets or fines. The changes are intended to provide people with more transparency and more simple navigation

when dealing with the bureaus that hold their credit reports. The plan gives hope to consumers that have been frustrated with the quality and accuracy of their reports, the National Foundation for Credit Counseling said in a statement. □



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Syria's march toward destruction reaches its 4th year

RYAN LUCAS

Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — It began in March 2011 with a few words spray-painted on a schoolyard wall: "Your turn is coming, doctor." The doctor in question was Syrian President Bashar Assad, a trained ophthalmologist whose family has ruled the country for more than 40 years.

Inspired by uprisings rippling across the Arab world, Syrians flooded the streets for largely peaceful demonstrations demanding change and political reforms. The security services greeted them with clubs, bludgeons and bullets. The protests persisted in the face of an escalating government crackdown before the opposition eventually took up arms,



In this December 2014 photo released by SANA, Syrian President Bashar Assad, center, speaks with Syrian troops during his visit to the front line in the eastern Damascus district of Jobar, Syria. It began in March 2011 with a few words spray-painted on a schoolyard wall: "Your turn is coming, doctor." The doctor in question was Syrian President Bashar Assad, a trained ophthalmologist whose family has ruled the country for more than 40 years. (AP Photo/SANA)

slowly turning the uprising into a voracious civil war that continues to devour the country and drag the region into its maelstrom.

Four years on, there is no end in sight. As Syria marks the fourth anniversary of the uprising, here's a look at the conflict, its enor-

mous price and how we got here:

CIVIL WAR'S TOLL?

Staggering, by any measure. More than 220,000 people have been killed and an estimated 1 million wounded in a country with a pre-war population of 23 million.

Nearly 4 million people have fled Syria, putting a massive burden on the countries taking them in — Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan and Iraq. Another 7.8 million people are displaced within Syria, part of an estimated 12.8 million who are in dire need of humanitarian assistance. Diseases eradicated years ago, such as polio, have staged a comeback as the health care system has collapsed. Bridges, roads, power plants, schools, hospitals, entire neighborhoods and even towns have been destroyed. Aleppo, once the country's largest city and its commercial capital, has been split apart and devastated by rebels and government forces. Syria's social fabric is equally in tatters. The country is home to a tapestry of faiths and ethnicities — Sunni and Shiite Muslims, Alawites, Druze, Kurds and Christians. Before the war, the various communities by and large co-existed peacefully and even intermarried.

HOW IS ASSAD STILL IN POWER?

The Syrian leader's grip on power looked shaky in 2012, prompting predictions that his fall was imminent. But Assad, his inner circle and security establishment proven remarkably resilient. They managed to shore up their hold on Damascus and the urban centers in the heavily populated western half of

the country.

Support from Iran, a close ally, has proven instrumental in steadying Assad. On the military front, Tehran has provided advisers and billions of dollars in aid. It has helped train tens of thousands of Syrian paramilitary fighters known as the National Defense Forces, which fight on front lines across the country. Tehran's greatest contribution may be roping in Shiite militias from across the region — particularly Lebanon's Hezbollah but also fighters from Iraq — to reinforce the government's beleaguered troops.

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?

Nothing points to the conflict ending anytime soon. The government and the opposition view the war as an existential struggle and have yet to bleed themselves out. The Islamic State group is focusing its efforts on building its self-declared caliphate and wages war against anyone that stands in its way — Assad, rebels, Kurds.

Every diplomatic effort so far has failed. Peace talks between the opposition and the government last year broke down after two rounds and zero progress. A Russian initiative this year to bring the two sides to the negotiating table in Moscow fizzled quickly after the main opposition figures boycotted.

The current U.N. envoy to Syria, Staffan de Mistura, has set himself the more modest goal of trying to "freeze" the fighting in Aleppo, which he envisions as a first step toward a wider easing of hostilities. But even this plan faces considerable obstacles and has been greeted with skepticism. □

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Nemtsov unlikely killed by Islamic extremists, friends say

LAURA MILLS
Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Supporters of slain Russian opposition politician Boris Nemtsov dismissed suggestions Monday that his shooting could have been motivated by Islamic extremism. Five men are in custody in connection with the Feb. 27 shooting, and all of them are from the predominantly Muslim region of Chechnya, or other parts of the restive north Caucasus. Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov has said one of the main suspects, Zaur Dadaev, could have been motivated by Nemtsov's

said he wasn't an enemy of Islam. "The attempt to convince the public that Nemtsov was an obvious target for Islamic radicals doesn't stand up to criticism," Ilya Yashin told the Associated Press on Monday. "This version is extremely convenient for [President] Vladimir Putin, because it takes both him and his inner circle out of the line of fire." Five men, including Dadaev, have been detained in connection with Nemtsov's killing. They all appeared in a Moscow court Sunday, where Dadaev and another suspect were charged in connection with shoot-

which remains controversial among many Russians. Chechnya suffered two intense wars over the past

two decades between Russian forces and separatist rebels increasingly under the sway of fundamentalist

Islam. That reinforced the stereotype among many Russians of Chechens as violent extremists. □



Chechnya's regional leader Ramzan Kadyrov, center, and other Chechen top commanders inspect Chechen special forces during a rally at the Dinamo stadium in Chechen capital Grozny, Russia. Russian President Vladimir Putin bestowed a state award Monday on the leader of Chechnya, the North Caucasus strongman who hailed the suspected killer of an opposition politician as a "true patriot." Kadyrov drew criticism Sunday from government opponents after praising Zaur Dadaev, a Chechen suspect in the murder of Kremlin foe Boris Nemtsov. (AP Photo/Musa Sadulayev, file)

comments after the attack on French satirical publication Charlie Hebdo, which published cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad.

"Everyone who knows Zaur confirms that he is a deeply religious person who, like all Muslims, was shocked by the actions of Charlie and comments (of those) who supported the publication of the caricatures," Kadyrov said in a statement late Sunday.

In the Charlie Hebdo attack on Jan. 7 in Paris, 12 people were killed by two gunmen, who were later killed by police.

Nemtsov criticized the Charlie Hebdo attackers in an online post, saying that Islam was a "young religion that is current in its Middle Ages, and there is a long fight ahead to defeat the Islamic inquisition."

A long-time friend of Nemtsov and a fellow opposition activist, however,

ing Nemtsov as he walked across a bridge near the Kremlin. The other three were jailed pending charges being filed.

One of the judges said Dadaev had acknowledged involvement, but Dadaev didn't admit guilt in the courtroom, according to news agencies.

Footage from state channel NTV shows Dadaev turning to the camera and saying "I will say to you: I love the Prophet Muhammad."

Dadaev had been an officer in the Chechen police troops, though Kadyrov said he had left the forces under unclear circumstances. The other suspect who was charged, Anzor Gubashev, denied being guilty.

Supporters of Nemtsov, however, believe that by casting blame on Islamic extremists, investigators are attempting to shift blame away from the government and onto a minority



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Eurozone warns Greece to stop wasting time on reforms plan



Spanish Economy Minister Luis de Guindos, center, greets Greek Finance Minister Yanis Varoufakis, right, as Irish Finance Minister Michael Noonan arrives for a meeting of eurogroup finance ministers at the European Council building in Brussels, Monday March 9, 2015.

(AP Photo/Geert Vanden Wijngaert)

**ELENA BECATOROS
LORNE COOK**

Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — Greece's European creditors told Athens to stop wasting time and flesh out as of Wednesday its proposals for economic reforms, which are crucial to releasing vital funds to assure financial survival.

"We have spent now two

weeks apparently discussing who meets whom where, in what configuration, and on what agenda and it is a complete waste of time," Jeroen Dijsselbloem, the Dutch finance minister who heads the meeting known as the Eurogroup, said Monday. "We've talked about this long enough now," he told reporters, after the

fourth ministerial meeting on Greece in Brussels in a month.

After a meeting of the 19-nation group using the euro single currency, Greek Finance Minister Yanis Varoufakis agreed that technical talks on the reforms proposed by Greece to secure a four-month bailout extension should begin in Brussels on Wednesday

and denied holding up the process.

The eurozone agreed last month to extend Greece's bailout until June, but before it actually pays out more rescue loans it wants to approve a detailed list of reforms by April. So far, Greece has only outlined some of its proposals in broad terms.

After an initial list of seven initiatives, Varoufakis said that Greece would soon provide "another batch of seven or eight reforms" for the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund to assess.

The final 7.5 billion euro installment of Greece's 240 billion euro international bailout is still pending, and without it, the country is quickly running out of funds and faces repayments of IMF loan installments this month. Dijsselbloem said there could be "no talk of disbursement (of bailout funds) if there is no implementation."

He said the eurozone would consider disbursing the loans in parts, but that could happen only after Greece had begun implementing its reforms.

Greece's government was voted into power in January on promises of abolishing the budget austerity that accompanied the bailout. But it has had to roll back on a series of pre-election promises, including seeking a write-off of most of the country's debt. Over the weekend, Varoufakis said in an interview with Italy's *Corriere de la Sera* newspaper that if the creditors do not eventually approve the reforms, his government could call new elections or a referendum.

The government later clarified any referendum would be on the content of reforms and fiscal policy.

Among other reforms, Varoufakis' suggestions include using "non-professional inspectors" such as students, housewives and tourists, to crack down on tax evasion, according to a leaked copy of the letter. The inspectors would be hired on a short-term casual basis "to pose, after some basic training, as customers, on behalf of the tax authorities, while 'wired' for sound and video," the letter says. □

EU urges Libya to agree on national unity government in days

EDITH M. LEDERER

Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) —

The European Union's foreign affairs chief urged Libya's feuding political leaders on Monday to agree on a national unity government, warning that this needs to happen "within days, not weeks."

Federica Mogherini told the U.N. Security Council in a wide-ranging speech that the Libyan crisis is worsening, with terrorist acts spurred by the Islamic State extremist group spreading thousands of

miles from the heart of the Middle East into Libya, its neighbors and other African nations.

Mogherini strongly backed U.N. envoy Bernardino Leon's efforts toward reaching a Libyan political agreement.

He said the EU and the international community are "ready and willing to provide all kinds of assistance" to a national unity government.

Since the overthrow of longtime dictator Moammar Gadhafi in 2011, Libya has fragmented into

different warring militias and now has rival governments — one in the east, the other in the west. Representatives of the two governments are currently consulting on proposals to end the crisis made during three days of U.N.-sponsored talks in Morocco that ended Saturday. U.N. spokesman Samir Ghattas said the talks will reconvene by mid-week.

Mogherini said defeating the Islamic State group in Libya requires a political agreement and that the same holds for Syria, where

the EU strongly supports U.N. envoy Staffan de Mistura's effort to arrange local cease-fires to pave the way toward a broader solution.

She urged the international community to do more to win the "battle for hearts and minds" and counter the Islamic State and other terrorist groups trying to revive "a fabricated clash of civilizations."

She also said war, terrorism and poverty are forcing millions of people to flee in search of a better future, and the phenom-

enon of migration must be addressed on many fronts.

"We cannot let the Mediterranean, the cradle of millennial civilizations, turn into a grave for tens of thousands of innocent people," Mogherini said.

She also called for an urgent "sustainable solution" in Ukraine, a new international framework to solve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and a nuclear agreement with Iran that allows it to have a peaceful nuclear program and guarantees the security of the region and the world. □



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UN finds 'alarmingly high' levels of violence against women

SOMINI SENGUPTA

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UNITED NATIONS - The evidence is ubiquitous. The gang rape of a young woman on a bus in New Delhi sets off an unusual burst of national outrage in India. U.S. colleges face mounting scrutiny about campus rape. In South Sudan, women are assaulted by both sides in the civil war. In Iraq, jihadis enslave women for sex.

Despite the many gains women have made in education, health and even political power in the course of a generation, violence against women and girls worldwide "persists at alarmingly high levels," according to a U.N. analysis that the Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is scheduled to present to the General Assembly on Monday.

About 35 percent of women worldwide - more than 1 in 3 - said they had experienced violence in their lifetime, whether physical, sexual, or both, the report finds. One in 10 girls under the age of 18 was forced to have sex, it says.

The subject is under sharp focus as delegates from around the world gather here starting Monday to assess how well governments have done since they promised to ensure women's equality at a landmark conference in Beijing 20 years ago - and what to do next.

Hillary Rodham Clinton,

who attended the Beijing conference in 1995, is scheduled to speak Tuesday.

Since the Beijing conference, there has been mea-

sure, though mixed progress on many fronts, according to the U.N. analysis.

As many girls as boys are now enrolled in primary school, a sharp advance since 1995. Maternal mortality rates have fallen by half. And women are more likely to be in the labor force, though the pay gap is closing so slowly that it will take another 75 years before women and men

are paid equally for equal work. The share of women serving in legislatures has nearly doubled, too, though women still account for

percent of women who are murdered are killed by their partners.

Even as women's groups continue to push for laws that criminalize violence

against women and children alone costs the global economy \$4 trillion.

"Overall, as you look at the world, there have been no large victories in eradicating violence against women," said Valerie M. Hudson, a professor of politics at Texas A&M University who has developed world maps that chart the status of women. The vast majority of countries, by her metrics, do not have laws that protect women's physical safety.

In some cases, the laws on the books are the problem, women's rights advocates say. In some countries, like Nigeria, the law permits a man to beat his wife under certain circumstances. But even when laws are technically adequate, victims often do not feel comfortable going to law enforcement, or they are unable to pay the bribes required to file a police report.

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, the executive director of the U.N. agency for gender equity and women's empowerment - known as UN Women - said that for the laws to mean anything, governments around the world have to persuade their police officers, judges and medical personnel to take violence against women seriously.

"I am disappointed, I have to be honest," she said about the stubborn hold of violence against women.



Afghan women who cannot return to their homes live in a shelter run by Women for Afghan Women in Kabul, Afghanistan. About 35 percent of women worldwide - more than one in three - said they had experienced violence in their lifetime, whether physical, sexual, or both, a United Nations analysis found.

(Lynsey Addario/The New York Times)

only 1 in 5 legislators. All but 32 countries have adopted laws that guarantee gender equality in their constitutions. But violence against women - including rape, murder and sexual harassment - remains stubbornly high in countries rich and poor, at war and at peace. The United Nations' main health agency, the World Health Organization, found that 3B

- marital rape is still permitted in many countries - new types of attacks have emerged, some of them online, including rape threats on Twitter.

Where there are laws on the books, like ones that criminalize domestic violence, for instance, they are not reliably enforced. The economic impact is huge. One recent study found that domestic vio-

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Philippine military says 73 Muslim rebels dead in southern offensive

JIM GOMEZ

Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — Philippine forces have killed 73 hard-line Muslim rebels and a suspected foreign militant in a three-week offensive in the restive south, where 44 anti-terror police commandos were killed in January in a clash with insurgents, the military said Monday.

Military spokesman Lt. Col. Harold Cabunoc said six soldiers had been killed and 29 others have been wounded in the assaults that started Feb. 25 and have displaced about 25,000 villagers in a marshy region in the boundary of Maguindanao and North Cotabato provinces.

Military chief of staff Gen. Gregorio Pio Catapang ordered the assault against the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Movement rebels after they attacked civilian villages. The rebels also have been implicated in the Jan. 25 killings of 44 commandos during a raid to hunt a suspected terror-

ist in Maguindanao.

Numbering a few hundred, the insurgents broke off a few years ago from the main Moro Islamic Libera-

atrocities. They are running out of ammunition," Cabunoc told reporters.

The breakaway rebels have played down such



Filipino Muslims pray during an interfaith rally to call for unity and peace in southern Philippines at a park northeast of Manila, Philippines. Philippine forces have killed 73 hard-line Muslim rebels and a suspected foreign militant in the south, the military said Monday.

(AP Photo/Bullit Marquez)

tion Front, which signed a new Muslim autonomy deal with the government last year. The breakaway rebels vowed to continue fighting for a separate Muslim homeland.

"We have degraded their capability to conduct

military reports of battle gains in the past, branding them as propaganda.

The foreign militant was killed by Filipino marines late Saturday in a gun-battle in Maguindanao's Shariff Saydona Mustapha town, Cabunoc said. □

Officials: Investigators allege St Lucia police had 'death list'

STAN BISHOP

DAVID McFADDEN

Associated Press

CASTRIES, St. Lucia (AP) — A team of independent investigators is alleging that St. Lucia's police force maintained "death lists" of people deemed to be criminals and planted guns at the scenes of police shootings to legitimize their unlawful actions, the Caribbean country's leader announced.

In a national address, Prime Minister Kenny Anthony said a team of Jamaican investigators have delivered an "extremely damning" report looking at the deaths of 12 people fatally shot by police in 2010 and 2011, while another administration was in power. The investigators from the Jamaica Constabulary Force were invited by St. Lucia's government a year after the U.S. withdrew all assistance to island police citing concerns about allegations of unlawful killings.

Quoting from the report, which was not made public, Anthony said investigators found that all the shootings reviewed were "staged by the police" but reported publicly as homicides by unknown assailants. Guns were allegedly planted by officers and members of the police high command may have been involved in covering up the truth about the long-rumored extrajudicial shootings.

"The report confirms that 'the blacklist or death lists' referenced by the media, human rights organizations, victims' families and citizens alike did exist," Anthony said. Cameron Laure, president of the Police Welfare Association in St. Lucia, said he was receiving phone calls from "many police officers" about the details disclosed by the prime minister.

"I don't even know how to react at this point. I will have to meet with the commissioner of police as well as the other members first before making a full statement," he said. Alleged tampering with evidence didn't just happen at scenes of police-related fatalities, Anthony disclosed. During their probe, the investigators disclosed that the server used by some police commanders was "deliberately tampered with," he said. The dozen killings occurred during a security initiative called "Operation Restore Confidence" as the tourism-dependent island grappled with a worrying rise in violent crime. At the time, former Prime Minister Stephenson King publicly warned criminals that "no stone will be left unturned and there will be no hiding place for anyone."

During the period under review, five of the dozen men fatally shot by police were killed in a single operation in the southern town of Vieux Fort.

In its most recent annual report on the island, the U.S. State Department complained of the "limited progress" of probes into the deadly police shootings. In 2012, local inquests concluded that six of the 12 shootings were justified. But the U.S. imposed its sanctions the following year, indicating they did not have confidence in the outcomes of the inquests. □

Mexico:

Gunmen open fire on mayor's convoy

CIUDAD VICTORIA, Mexico (AP) — Authorities detained four alleged cartel members Monday in connection with an attack on the mayor of the border city of Matamoros.

Herminio Garza, Tamaulipas state secretary, said in an interview with the Televisa network Monday that federal police captured four suspected gunmen before dawn. They allegedly participated in the attack on the convoy of Matamoros Mayor Leticia Salazar

Sunday night, in which the mayor and her bodyguards escaped unharmed. He said the suspects told authorities they believed the convoy belonged to rivals encroaching on their territory, not the mayor. Gunmen in two vehicles fired on Salazar's convoy, but the armored vehicle she travelled in was not hit, Garza said. One sport utility vehicle carrying Salazar's bodyguards was hit. Matamoros is the stronghold of the Gulf cartel, which has

experienced intense fighting among its own factions in recent weeks. The city lies across the Rio Grande from Brownsville, Texas.

Garza said those detained could be members of the Gulf cartel, because "that's the most prevalent in that region."

Recent attacks have included a brief kidnapping of the editor of a local newspaper and a grenade attack on the local Televisa affiliate.

In early February, after



The Tropicana Casino Officially Re-opens and is Better Than Ever!



EAGLE BEACH - The Tropicana Casino has been closed for renovations for a few months. Fortunately the employees were not sent on a forced vacation as sometimes happens in other places - but they were actually a big part of the remodeling job themselves. They had lots of fun doing it too! This was a complete remodeling from new carpets, tables and chairs, hug bar, super modern kitchen to new associates uniforms. The building is totally reno-

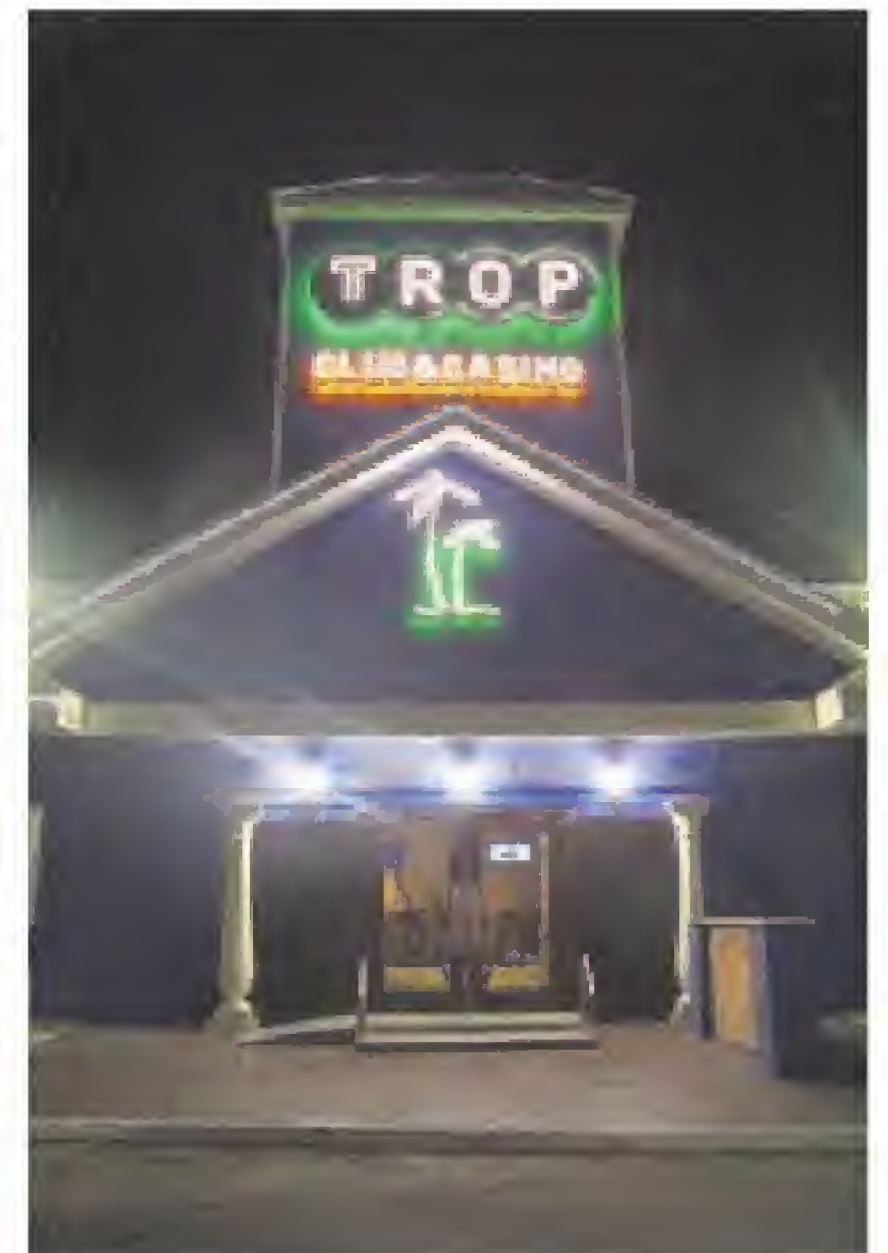
vated at a cost of just over one million, painted Ultra Marine Blue on the outside and has a modern spacious industrial look inside. The slots floor has been increased with 20% and our manpower staffing has been increased with 50%. For their members and guests the Tropicana Club & Casino Aruba has some big news to share: In 2015 you can expect a great deal more from your "Trop Advantage® card". How much more? Well, let's just say you're really

going places. Once you achieve Gold, Platinum or Black Card status, you will receive a complimentary three-night stay at The Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas and set sail with Carnival Cruise Lines® for up to eight days! Bon voyage! "Double Down Sports Bar & Grill" is a casual restaurant featuring a variety of boldly flavored, made-to-order menu items. The restaurant created an inviting neighborhood atmosphere that includes an extensive multi-media sys-



tem, a full bar and an open layout, which appeals to both sports fans and families. The helpful and always smiling staff members offer great service in an inviting atmosphere. The restaurant serves multiple uses; for example work-day lunch, dinner with the family, watching the big games, late-night cravings and room service for the hotel guest, beach tennis guests and take-out and soon breakfast. You will be able to will be eat & drink while you watch your favorite sport or games. One

unique feature is that every single eating booth has its own monitor. So, no matter where you sit, you will never miss out watching your favorite team play! The Tropicana Casino also offers a variety of theme nights. To mention just a few: Bingo, Ladies night, Local night, seniors day, Double points nights and new to Aruba: Friday Men's Night. To find out the complete weeks schedule, stop by to try your luck, watch a game or have a drink and a bite. □



Proceeds of the 4th Annual "Miss Canada" Beach Volleyball Tournament Awarded



PALM BEACH - After more than 30 years of returning to Aruba to escape the worst of Canada's winters, Michelle Begin and her husband Jean consider the island their "home away from home." Her vivacity and outgoing nature as well as pride for her homeland has earned her the nickname of "Ms. Canada," among island residents and her vacationing friends. During her five weeks on the island Michelle likes to keep busy, and for this community activist, it means being involved



with worthwhile causes and foundations. She cares greatly for the less fortunate and regularly hosts fundraising events in Canada and Africa. A few years ago, she began deploying her consummate people skills to assist Aruban foundations. She feels compelled to "give back" to the island where she has made so many dear friends, resulting in her annual fundraising volleyball tournament, a fun day for participants and spectators alike. This year, the tournament was conducted on Sunday, March 1. The awards of the monies raised were hosted by event sponsors Hard Rock Cafe on Friday

evening, March 6. The festive event is also a thank you to the volunteers who help Michelle during each year, comprised of her Canadian compatriots who live and vacation on the island, and many of her Dutch and Aruban friends with whom she shares a strong bond of community activism. Also honored were principal sponsors, La Cabana Beach Resort, Portfolio Printing, Balashi Brewery and Tropical Bottling, as well as Hard Rock Cafe. Farita Luidens of the local TV lifestyle show Nos Mainta and Ruben Garcia of Power FM radio received tribute for their steadfast support of the

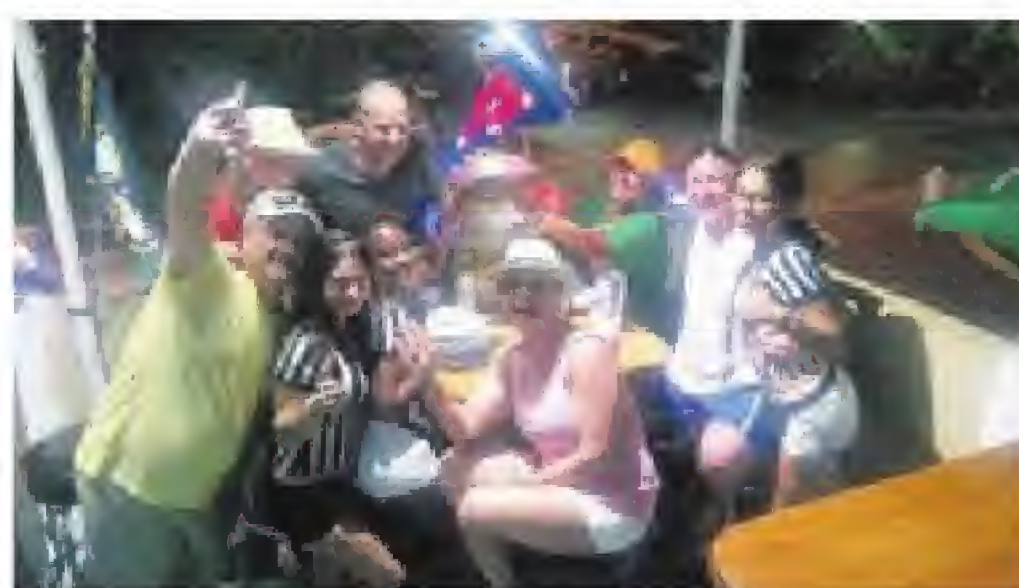
project. Special thanks go to the local vendors who donated prizes for the all-important raffle. They are Queens Jewelers, Diamanté Jewels & Time, Marriott Vacation Club, and Renaissance Resort. This year, proceeds of \$7,800 were distributed to Ambiente Feliz, a full time home for the mentally challenged, the Aruba Scholarship Foundation, elderly care facility Stichting Thuiszorg Aruba, and to Hycienth Palmer, who personally cooks large batches of soup that she distributes to the elderly and less fortunate.

Ernst Giel of the Aruba Tourism Authority was on hand to present the Begins with an Emerald Ambassador Certificate for their steadfast dedication to Aruba and contributions to the community. Daniel Tecklenborg, the director of CEDE Aruba, which administers and finds funding for the island's foundations and worthwhile social projects, praised Michelle, "Miss Canada" Begin for her devotion to the underprivileged. He cited how fortunate Aruba was to have her as an annual visitor, selflessly sacrificing her vacation time to assist Aruba's needy and put these important causes into the spotlight. □



March Madness at Touchdown Sports Bar and Grill Aruba!

PALM BEACH - The 2015 NCAA Men's Division I Basketball Tournament will involve 68 College Teams playing in a single-elimination tournament to determine the National Champion of Men's NCAA Division I College Basketball. It is scheduled to begin on March 17, 2015, and will conclude with the Championship Game on April 6 at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis, Indiana.



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--Top American comedians perform in Ray Ellin's phenomenal show at the Marriott Resort and Stellaris Casino TONIGHT!

PALM BEACH – "Aruba Ray's Comedy Show," has just one night left, this evening at 830pm. If you haven't been, it is the best night time event here in Aruba. You can purchase tickets online at www.ArubaComedy.com. Each show consists of three of New York's top stand up comedians. The performances have been taking place off and on for the past two years, and have gotten rave reviews. The shows are the brainchild of "Aruba Ray" Ellin, a successful comedian and entrepreneur from New York City. Ellin has produced (and starred in) television shows, films, and literally hundreds of live shows. He is considered

by his peers to be the best host in NYC, something he has demonstrated night after night these past five weeks.

After coming to Aruba every month for the past three years, Ellin decided to bring top entertainment to the island he loves, and was given the name "Aruba Ray" by one of his fellow comedians.

The shows have been top notch; all of the performers have appeared on major television shows.

"We are thrilled to have these great shows at our resort!" said Martha Miller. "We've been coming to Aruba for years, and are so glad to have this type of entertainment. It's long overdue."

Tonight's show is at 830pm in the Amsterdam Ballroom at the Marriott Resort, down the hall from their casino. The doors open at 8pm.

Tickets can be purchased at www.ArubaComedy.com.

If you do not have a computer, you can ask your concierge for assistance. You can also call 520-6606 or 749-4363 for more information and reservations.



Ticketing and seating is first come first serve. Doors open at 8pm.

If available, you can purchase tickets in person at the Amsterdam Ballroom door starting at 730pm. Tickets are \$34. There is also an option to purchase a premium four-hour open

bar, and each person gets \$10 FREE Slot Play cash with each ticket.

Tonight's lineup: BRIAN SCOTT McFADDEN. Brian has appeared on the David Letterman show, the Craig Ferguson Show, and the hit Ben Stiller film The Secret Life of Walter Mitty. MIKE BURTON, from Fox TV and Comedy Central. RAY ELLIN will host the shows. Ray has appeared on many television programs; he is the host of the new Gong Show Live, a resurrection of the classic 70's television show. He also hosted the popular talk show Late Net, and hosted the television shows The Movie Loft, Brain Fuel, and New York Now. He also produced and directed the very successful film The Latin Legends of Comedy, distributed by 20th Century Fox.

Additional info: It is suggested to arrive ear-

ly – seating is first come first serve. Doors open at 8pm. The tickets are \$34. And each Comedy Ticket gives every audience member \$10 in FREE Slot Play in the Stellaris Casino at the Marriott (ID required!). Also, each Comedy Ticket will also provide a 20% discount to the Aruba La Vista buffet.

Audience members can purchase an optional four hour premium open bar for only \$20! The premium open bar continues after the show in the casino until midnight. An incredible deal, and a full night out. Drinks are available for purchase, but there is NO drink minimum!

Anyone can attend, however the show is suggested for a mature audience. These comedians perform regularly in New York City's biggest venues.

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tersports such as wave runners, parasailing, tubing and much more. Our desks are located at Casa del Mar (pool deck), Playa Linda resort next to the juice bar, Holiday Inn Desk and at the Concierge & Pelican Pier desk located between Holiday Inn hotel & Playa Linda Resort.

Pelican Nest Restaurant offers an impressive selection of fresh seafood (caught daily by our own fleet), International dishes and a re-



laxing atmosphere. Open daily for dinner reservations call 297-586-2259 from 11 am.

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Merryweather has a love and passion for fishing. A fisherman who knows about fish, what our local waters have to offer, and what the words "fresh seafood" really mean. What Herby catches will be served in his restaurant on the same day. Herby loves to share his fishing passion with the many visitors to the island. His fleet of a 35ft. Twin Engine Bertram yacht and a 50ft. Twin Engine Post yacht, appropriately called "Driftwood I and II, is available for charters on 12 noon and from 1pm to 5pm.



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SPORTS

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NHL Capsules Brassard's OT goal gives Rangers 1-0 win over Black- hawks



New York Rangers' Ryan McDonagh (27) celebrates with teammate Derick Brassard after Brassard scored a goal to defeat the Chicago Blackhawks 1-0 in overtime of an NHL hockey game Sunday, March 8, 2015, in Chicago.

Associated Press

The Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Derick Brassard scored 32 seconds into overtime and Cam Talbot made 29 saves for his fifth shutout of the season in the New York Rangers' 1-0 victory over the Chicago Blackhawks in the NHL on Sunday night. Brassard swooped in from left wing and fired a shot past Corey Crawford on the stick side after taking a cross-ice feed from Mats Zuccarello. The Rangers moved within a point of the first-place New York Islanders in the Metropolitan Division. Talbot was sharp in his 15th start in 16 games since No. 1 goalie Henrik Lundqvist has been sidelined with a neck injury. Talbot has eight career shutouts. Crawford finished with 35 saves after stopping a career-high 46 shots Friday night in a 2-1 shootout win over Edmonton.

Continued on Page 21



ROLLING THUNDER

Triple-double again for Westbrook in win

Page 20

Oklahoma City Thunder guard Russell Westbrook (0) goes up for a shot past Toronto Raptors guard Kyle Lowry (7) in the third quarter of an NBA basketball game in Oklahoma City, Sunday, March 8, 2015.

Associated Press



Canadian musher Rob Cooke is the first off the line during the ceremonial start of the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race, Saturday, March 7, 2015, in Anchorage, Alaska. **Associated Press**

Iditarod begins; mushers embark on new route across Alaska

MARK THIESSEN
Associated Press

FAIRBANKS, Alaska (AP)

— Iditarod mushers began their 1,000-mile (1,609-kilometer) trek across Alaska along a new route Monday after poor trail conditions forced organizers to push the race's start north, bypassing a mountain range. Canadian rookie Rob Cooke, who hails from Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, was the first musher to leave in Fairbanks in the staggered start.

The Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race usually kicks off 225 miles (362 kilometers) south in Willow, but officials decided to move it because of a lack of snow in the Alaska Range.

The Iditarod spans two mountain ranges, dangerous wilderness and the wind-whipped Bering Sea

coast. This is only the second time Fairbanks has hosted the official start; similar low-snow conditions also moved it there in 2003. The same weather pattern that repeatedly dumped snow on the East Coast has left Alaska fairly warm and snowless this winter. Even a snowstorm projected to dump up to 9 inches of snow Friday in Anchorage turned into an all-night rain instead.

The lack of snow has made for treacherous conditions south of the Alaska Range, especially in the area of the Daltzell Gorge, considered the roughest patch for mushers and dogs. This is where many mushers were bloodied and bruised in crashes last year.

Officials said this year's conditions are worse.

The new route will reduce

the number of checkpoints in the early part of the race. But it adds stops at villages that have never been part of the Iditarod — like tiny Huslia, an Athabaskan village of about 300 residents.

Even though the Alaska Range has been eliminated, the race will now be run on about 600 miles (965 kilometers) of river ice, and that can cause a whole new set of obstacles to overcome.

This year's Iditarod includes 78 mushers, including 20 rookies and six former champions.

Racers leave the starting chute in two-minute intervals. Their goal is to be first musher to drive their dog team to the finish line in the coastal town of Nome.

The winner will pocket \$70,000. □

Alex Cejka wins Puerto Rico Open in 5-man playoff

RIO GRANDE, Puerto Rico (AP) — Alex Cejka won the Puerto Rico Open on Sunday for his first PGA Tour title, making a 15-foot birdie putt on the first hole of a five-man playoff.

The 44-year-old Czech-born German won in his 287th start on the PGA Tour. A four-time European Tour winner, he birdied four of the first six holes and finished with a 3-under 69 in rainy, windy conditions at Trump International-Puerto Rico.

"I'm speechless," Cejka said. "I'm glad it's over. It's been a grinding week, tough week. The first victory is always the toughest. ... These guys are good. I mean this is the slogan. At least I can say I played the PGA Tour for a long time and I won. So that's a good sentence I can use when I retire."

Sam Saunders, Arnold Palmer's grandson, had a chance to force another playoff hole, but his 8-foot birdie try on the par-5 18th went to the right.

"I really felt like I hit a pretty good putt there," Saunders said. "It went right on me and I was playing it inside the hole. I'm still proud. I had a great week ... just good things going forward. Happy for Alex. He's been out here so long and he's been a great player for a long time. He deserves it. I'm very happy for him. Hopefully, I'll



Alex Cejka kisses his trophy after winning the Puerto Rico Open in Rio Grande, Puerto Rico, Sunday, March 8, 2015, the 44-year-old Czech-born German's first PGA Tour title. **Associated Press**

have more chances like this."

Jon Curran, Tim Petrovic and Argentina's Emiliano Grillo also were in the playoff.

Grillo and Curran shared the lead at 8 under with one hole left in regulation, but closed with bogeys in the second-to-last group. "Nobody even thought that two guys could make bogey on the last," Cejka said.

Grillo missed a short par putt and settled for a 70.

"It's definitely a tough one," Grillo said. "But I would take a playoff at the beginning of the week and

have a chance to win the tournament. It's hard. ... It feels like I should have won this tournament by four or five shots."

Cejka had already changed clothes, thinking he had no chance to get in a playoff.

"If that would be a long par 4, people can make bogey, but a par 5 downwind — they moved the tees up — and two guys bogeyed," Cejka said. "The odds were not that good. I changed. I had everything ready to go to the airport and almost was very satisfied with a third finish. And

suddenly it changed, and here I am. And I'm very, very pleased. I don't think I'm going to sleep tonight."

He quickly changed back into golf attire.

"We had a couple of minutes," Cejka said. "I had shorts on and a T-shirt and I had everything packed. Luckily, there was one more group, the final group coming, so I changed. But I didn't hit balls. Some of the guys were hitting balls in the rain or putting. But I literally just put some fresh clothes on me and some dry clothes and I was ready to go."

Curran also had a 70.

"I'm really proud of myself to put myself in the position that I was in. It was just kind of a surreal place to be," Curran said. "I had a chance to win. I was right there." Petrovic shot a 67, and Saunders had a 68.

Scott Brown, the 2013 winner playing in the final group, had a chance to get into the playoff with a birdie on the final hole, but made a bogey to drop into a tie for 10th at 5 under. He finished with a 73.

DIVOTS: At 44 years, 3 months, 6 days, Cejka is the oldest first-time winner since Ken Duke won the 2013 Travelers at 44 years, 4 months, 25 days. ... Grillo played on a sponsor exemption. □

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Major league teams wrestle with personal catchers

JAY COHEN

AP Sports Writer

MESA, Arizona (AP) — Soon after the Chicago Cubs signed Jon Lester over the winter, they brought in David Ross. Clayton Kershaw praised the work of A.J. Ellis, and the Los Angeles Dodgers re-signed the veteran catcher in January.

Then, there is Johnny Cueto and Brayan Pena in Cincinnati, and R.A. Dickey and Josh Thole in Toronto.

The concept of personal catchers, the pairing of ace pitchers and usually light-hitting backstops for a majority of their starts, has been around for decades. Steve Carlton and Tim Lincecum had a successful run with St. Louis and Philadelphia, and Greg Maddux loved throwing to Eddie Perez in Atlanta. But there are a handful of teams taking a closer look at that type of arrangement this spring, with most of them trying for more flexibility for the upcoming season.

"I think it has to be a very special relationship," said Reds manager Bryan Price, a former pitching coach. "That being said, you have to be capable and willing to throw to whoever is back there. The catcher's responsibility is making that pitcher comfortable and confident that he's back there." Lester had a lot of success with Ross last season, but the revamped Cubs also acquired Miguel Montero in December. The Dodgers got Yasmani Grandal in an offseason trade with San Diego, likely pushing Ellis into a reserve role, and the Reds have emerging star Devin Mesoraco behind the plate. Russell Martin is learning how to catch Dickey's knuckleball after signing an \$82 million, five-year contract with Toronto, putting Thole's roster spot in jeopardy.

It's a much different situation for Kansas City, which is mulling over a personal catcher for one of its starting pitchers to ensure Salvador Perez gets more rest. Perez set a couple of major league records last year by catching 158 games

and 1,389 2-3 innings, including 15 games and 141 innings in the playoffs.

"It's just easier when you've got a guy like Sal, for me, you know he's not playing that day," manager Ned Yost said.

The most popular reason for a personal catcher is the rapport between the battery, and the im-

catcher does, that could be a consideration. So there's different ways to look at it, absolutely. I don't try to get too nuts about it, I really don't."

Lester had Ross behind the plate for most of his starts last year, when he went 16-11 with a career-low 2.46 ERA. The left-hander finalized a \$155 million, six-year

here recently, he's obviously going to be a vital part of this team. He's not just here for me."

Ellis was behind the plate for 22 games and 164 1-3 innings as Kershaw put together one of the best seasons for a pitcher in years. The lefty was 21-3 with a 1.77 ERA in 27 starts on his way to his second consecutive NL Cy Young Award



Los Angeles Dodgers catcher A.J. Ellis fails to throw out Milwaukee Brewers' Elan Herrera at first during the third inning of a spring training baseball game in Glendale, Ariz., on Sunday, March 8, 2015.

portance of that relationship to the success of the team. The particular catcher and pitcher are often close friends, which helps them work together on the field. But the rise of defensive metrics, including data on pitch framing, also can help create a successful pairing.

"A part of a catcher being good is that maybe he receives velocity better," Cubs manager Joe Maddon said, "and that could be a consideration. This guy's a low-ball pitcher, this guy really handles the low-ball well, this

contract with Chicago on Dec. 15, and Ross' \$5 million, two-year contract was announced eight days later.

Lester has a 2.77 ERA in 29 games and 195 innings with Ross behind the plate, according to STATS. His career ERA is 3.58.

"It's always good when you have comfort, when you see comfort, when you feel comfort," Lester said after throwing to Ross in his first spring start. "That's obviously something that you always kind of fall back on."

"But like I've said in the past and

Associated Press
and his first NL MVP trophy. Ellis has caught Kershaw for 603 1-3 innings over 86 games, compiling a 1.94 ERA.

"He's been around for three years now and he deserves a lot of credit for my success," Kershaw said. "We're on the same page and that just comes with trusting him and knowing the game. You hope you can have that rapport with all your catchers and I'm sure as Yasmani catches me more we'll get there, too. But it's definitely nice to have somebody that's been there before." □

NBA Capsules

Westbrook's 7th triple-double leads OKC past Raptors

The Associated Press
OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — Russell Westbrook had his fifth triple-double in six games to help the Oklahoma City Thunder beat the Toronto Raptors 108-104 on Sunday night.

The NBA scoring leader had 30 points, matched a career high with 17 assists and added 11 rebounds for his seventh triple-double of the season and 15th overall.

Enes Kanter had 21 points and 12 rebounds, and Serge Ibaka had 21 points and five blocks for the Thunder. They remained alone in eighth place in the Western Conference standings. DeMar DeRozan scored 24 points for Toronto. The Raptors have lost three straight. **WARRIORS 106, CLIPPERS 98** **OAKLAND, California (AP)** — Draymond Green had 23 points and six assists and Golden State beat Los Angeles for its sixth straight home victory.

Klay Thompson added 21 points on 9-for-13 shooting. Shaun Livingston gave Golden State another nice lift off the bench with a season-best 21 points and



Oklahoma City Thunder center Enes Kanter (34) is fouled by Toronto Raptors forward Terrence Ross, rear, as he shoots between Ross and center Jonas Valanciunas (17) in the fourth quarter of an NBA basketball game in Oklahoma City, Sunday, March 8, 2015.

Associated Press

eight rebounds in 28 minutes to help the supporting cast take some pressure off do-everything point guard Stephen Curry. Curry didn't score his first field goal until 5:16 before halftime and finished with 12 points and four assists.

Austin Rivers had 22 points for Los Angeles.

SPURS 116, BULLS 105

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Tony Parker had a season-high 32 points as San Antonio

beat Chicago for its fifth straight victory.

Tim Duncan failed to make a basket for the first time in his career, ending his NBA-record streak at 1,310 games. He was 0 for 8 while and finished with three points.

Kawhi Leonard added 20 points, Patty Mills had 15 points and Manu Ginobili 14 for the Spurs.

Pau Gasol had 23 points and Aaron Brooks added

22 for Chicago.

MAVERICKS 100, LAKERS 93 **LOS ANGELES (AP)** — Monta Ellis scored 18 of his 31 points in the third quarter and Dallas closed with a 16-3 spurt in the final 6:36 to beat Los Angeles.

Dirk Nowitzki had 12 points for the Mavericks. They played without point guard Devin Harris for the second straight game because of an injured right hand, but Chandler Parsons had 11 points and six rebounds in 35 minutes after missing seven games with a sprained left ankle.

Carlos Boozer had 17 points and eight rebounds for the Lakers.

MAGIC 103, CELTICS 98

ORLANDO, Florida (AP) — Tobias Harris and Maurice Harkless combined for 16 points in the fourth quarter to help Orlando rally to beat Boston.

Victor Oladipo scored 22 points for the Magic, Harris had 21 and rookie Elfrid Payton added 19 points, 10 rebounds and seven assists. Isaiah Thomas scored 21 points for Boston. Brandon Bass added 19 points and 16 rebounds.

HORNETS 108, PISTONS 101

AUBURN HILLS, Michigan (AP) — Al Jefferson scored 24 points and streaking Charlotte beat Detroit in a matchup of Eastern Conference playoff hopefuls. Mo Williams had 19 points and nine assists for the Hornets.

Reggie Jackson led the Pistons with 25 points.

JAZZ 95, NETS 88

NEW YORK (AP) — Gordon Hayward scored 24 points, including five straight to stop a Brooklyn rally, as Utah beat the Nets.

Former Nets forward Derrick Favors added 22 points and eight rebounds for the Jazz.

Utah won for the seventh time in nine games and finished off a 3-1 road trip.

Brook Lopez had 19 points and 10 rebounds for the Nets.

In other NBA games it was San Antonio 116, Chicago 105; Golden State 106, L.A. Clippers 98; Orlando 103, Boston 98; Charlotte 108, Detroit 101; Utah 95, Brooklyn 88; Oklahoma City 108, Toronto 104; and Dallas 100, L.A. Lakers 93. □



Orlando City SC's Kaka (10) moves the ball past New York City FC's Sebastian Velasquez, left, during the second half of an MLS soccer game, Sunday, March 8, 2015, in Orlando, Fla.

Associated Press

Kaka's late goal gives Orlando City 1-1 draw with NYCFC

The Associated Press

ORLANDO, Florida (AP) — Brazil international Kaka scored in extra time for Orlando City to salvage a 1-1 draw against New York City FC in the first match for the latest expansion teams to join Major League Soccer. New York appeared to be on its way to victory in the 76th minute when Mix Diskerud took a pass from David Villa just outside the area and rifled a curling shot that sneaked inside the far post to go up 1-0.

But Orlando was awarded a free kick in the 91st minute after Kevin Molino was fouled 10 yards outside the area, setting up Kaka's goal on a deflection off New York's wall.

The 32-year-old Kaka, who

played in the World Cup for Brazil in 2002, 2006 and 2010, signed a three-and-a-half year deal with Orlando last July after terminating his contract with AC Milan. He was on loan to San Paulo FC in the MLS off-season.

"The result wasn't what we wanted, but everything that happened today was really incredible," Kaka said. "We have a lot to improve on and we're going to improve, but it was a really special day for everyone on this team."

A crowd of 62,510 watched the match, the second-highest attendance for an MLS inaugural game after the 69,255 people who watched the L.A. Galaxy's debut in 1996.

In Seattle, U.S. national team captain Clint Dempsey scored twice and Obafemi Martins added a goal to help the Sounders beat New England 3-0.

Dempsey opened the scoring in the 25th minute on a penalty after being taken down in the area by New England's Juan Agudelo. He put the match out of reach in the 67th with a goal off a pass from Marco Pappa.

Elsewhere, short-handed Sporting Kansas City was held to a 1-1 draw against the New York Red Bulls.

Sporting opened the scoring in the 50th minute when Ike Opara headed in Benny Feilhaber's cross. Lloyd Sam got the equalizer four minutes later. □

NHL Capsules

Continued from Page 17

BRUINS 5, RED WINGS 3
BOSTON (AP) — Daniel Paille scored two goals, one short-handed, and Brad Marchand added a short-handed goal in Boston's victory over Detroit. Clinging to the Eastern Conference's eighth and final playoff spot, Boston is 5-1-1 in its last

saves, while Tuukka Rask got the day off after playing 21 of 22 games. Luke Glendening, Gustav Nyquist and Marek Zidlicky scored for the Red Wings. They have lost two straight after a three-game winning streak.

AVALANCHE 3, WILD 2
ST. PAUL, Minnesota (AP) — Semyon Varlamov stopped 29 shots and Zach Redmond had a goal and an assist as Colorado beat Minnesota.

Cody McLeod and Gabriel Landeskog also

Minnesota. The Wild had won five straight. **DEVILS 5, FLYERS 2**
NEWARK, New Jersey (AP) — Adam Henrique scored two goals and Keith Kinkaid had 25 saves in his return to the lineup to lead New Jersey past Philadelphia. Jacob Josefson broke a second-period tie with a short-handed goal and defenseman Eric Gelinas added a power-play tally to help the Devils bounce back from a disappointing loss to Columbus and send the Flyers to their second loss in

scoring total to 19 goals for Edmonton. Jordan Eberle added a goal and two assists for the Oilers.

SENATORS 5, FLAMES 4, SO

OTTAWA, Ontario (AP) — Erik Karlsson scored the winner in the sixth round of the shootout as Ottawa beat Calgary after blowing a big lead in regulation.

Alex Chiasson, Milan Michalek, Mark Borowicki and Mike Hoffman scored for the Senators.

They led 4-0 in the third period before giving up four straight goals to allow the Flames to tie it.

Kris Russell scored twice for the Flames, and Joe Colborne and Mikael Backlund added goals. In other NHL games it was Ottawa 5, Calgary 4, SO

Boston 5, Detroit 3; Carolina 7, Edmonton 4; New Jersey 5, Philadelphia 2; Colorado 3, Minnesota 2; and

N.Y. Rangers 1, Chicago 0, OT. □



seven. David Pastmak and Loui Eriksson each had a power-play goal for Boston. Backup goalie Niklas Svedberg made 36

scored for Colorado. Chris Stewart and Thomas Vanek scored late for the Wild, and Devan Dubnyk had 18 saves in his 24th straight start for

two days. Stephen Gionta also scored and Steve Bernier added three assists.

Ryan White and Michael Raffl scored for the Flyers.

HURRICANES 7, OILERS 4
RALEIGH, North Carolina (AP) — Elias Lindholm had three goals for his first hat trick and added two assists as Carolina rallied from three goals down to beat Edmonton.

Jeff Skinner scored twice, and Alexander Semin and Andrej Nestrasil added goals for Carolina. Ryan Nugent-Hopkins had his second career hat trick to increase his



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UNFINISHED BUSINESS
MON-THURS 4:00 | 5:35 | 7:35 | 9:35
FRI 4:00 | 5:35 | 7:35 | 9:35 | 11:35
SAT 3:35 | 5:35 | 7:35 | 9:35 | 11:35
SUN & HOL 3:35 | 5:35 | 7:35 | 9:35

CHAPPIE
MON-THURS 5:35 | 8:10
FRI 5:35 | 8:10 | 10:45
SAT 3:00 | 5:35 | 8:10 | 10:45
SUN & HOL 3:00 | 5:35 | 8:10
ON TWO SCREENS

McFARLAND USA
MON-THURS 3:50 | 6:30 | 9:10
FRI 3:50 | 6:30 | 9:10
SAT 3:50 | 6:30 | 9:10
SUN & HOL 3:50 | 6:30 | 9:10

focus
WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES
MON-THURS 4:50 | 7:10 | 9:30
FRI 4:50 | 7:10 | 9:30 | 11:50
SAT 2:30 | 4:50 | 7:10 | 9:30 | 11:50
SUN & HOL 2:30 | 4:50 | 7:10 | 9:30

Kingsman THE SECRET SERVICE
MON-THURS 4:00 | 6:25 | 9:10
FRI 4:00 | 6:25 | 9:10
SAT 4:00 | 6:25 | 9:10
SUN & HOL 4:00 | 6:25 | 9:10

THE SPONGEBOB MOVIE SPONGE OUT OF WATER 3D
3D VERSION
MON-THURS 4:20 | 8:35
FRI 4:20 | 8:35 | 10:45
SAT 4:20 | 8:35 | 10:45
SUN & HOL 4:20 | 8:35
2D VERSION
MON-FRI 6:30
SAT 2:10 | 6:30
SUN & HOL 2:10 | 6:30

Tinker Bell and the LEGEND OF THE NEVERBEAST
SAT 2:00
SUN & HOL 2:00

FIFTY SHADES OF GREY
MON-THURS 4:05 | 6:45 | 9:25
FRI 4:05 | 6:45 | 9:25
SAT SAT 1:50 | 4:05 | 6:45 | 9:25
SUN & HOL 1:50 | 4:05 | 6:45 | 9:25

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More money available as NFL teams dive into free agency

ARNIE STAPLETON
AP Pro Football Writer

Some teams go wild spending for veterans in free agency. Others prefer to focus on the fresh crop of talent at American universities.

Free agency philosophies vary almost as much as teams' uniforms, and they can change year to year depending on the budget. Fans love free agency because most of the players are known quantities, if not household names. But it's important to remember when the market opens Tuesday that there are always reasons these players are available in the first place, be it consistency, character, chemistry or simply cost.

"In a perfect world," Bears general manager Ryan Pace said, "you address a lot of your needs in free agency to open up the draft for (the) best player available."

Broncos boss John Elway has made some splashy moves in free agency the last few years, including signing the biggest free agent ever in Peyton Manning. He's also lured Louis Vasquez, Wes Welker, T.J. Ward, Aqib Talib and DeMarcus Ware to the Bron-



In this Sept. 28, 2014, file photo, Dallas Cowboys' DeMarco Murray (29) sprints to the end zone for a touchdown as New Orleans Saints' Jarius Byrd, left, attempts to stop him during the second half of an NFL football game in Arlington, Texas.

Associated Press

cos.

He's more strapped for cash this year, even with Manning's \$4 million pay cut.

Like just about every general manager, he swears he'd rather pick his players on draft day than recruit them — even though he can wine and dine them at his own "Elway's" steakhouse. "Our philosophy is to build in the draft and then add with free agency," Elway said. "We've just been fortunate (to) get some very good high-profile players." Like most roster builders, Elway prefers players seeking their second contract be-

cause they're experienced but still in their prime. Still, he's grabbed the likes of Jim Leonhard, Keith Brooking and Brandon Stokley from the NFL's bargain bin, and all of them paid big dividends for a year.

Finding comfort on the other side of the spectrum is Packers GM Ted Thompson, whose team was well under the salary cap last year as it chose not to spend about \$10 million in available funds.

While some flustered fans argue that money might have made a difference in reaching the Super Bowl, "we don't necessarily look

at it like that," Thompson said. "We feel like we understand what the cap means. It doesn't mean we roll over money every year and it doesn't mean we spend to the last penny. We run our business the way we think it should be run. We like to get in position where we make football decisions and don't make economic decisions."

Like Green Bay, the Steelers have traditionally stayed quiet in the spring only to roar in the fall. They've found a happy middle ground, bringing in the likes of lesser-known, lower-cost free agents such as Arthur Moates and Brice McCain. This year, teams have more money to throw around with the salary cap rising \$10 million to \$143.2B million.

That's good news for the likes of Ndamukong Suh, Devin McCourty, Julius Thomas, Byron Maxwell, DeMarco Murray and others looking to cash in. And while every team would love to land one of these crown jewel free agents, most swear they'd prefer to find the next big player in the draft.

The Redskins used to "win" every offseason — in part because they'd get a

head-start on it by continually missing the play-offs. Mostly, however, it was because Dan Snyder threw around his money to sign high-profile players like Deion Sanders, Bruce Smith and Albert Haynesworth.

The pendulum has swung in the last few years, and new GM Scott McCloughan had this to say: "You start dabbling too much in free agency, sometimes you're getting older guys, you get the medical history" and players set in their ways.

"I think the best-case scenario is you draft and mold your own (players) and resign your own," he said. "But free agency is still there to be used to make a roster stronger, too."

Several teams are carrying over wads of money they did not spend in 2014, giving them higher adjusted salary cap numbers. The highest such total is Jacksonville at \$168.4 million.

"You have to be wise to not mortgage the future," Jaguars GM Dave Caldwell said. "There's no sense of urgency for us to go out and spend for the sake of spending, but we'll be aggressive. If there is a player we want, we're going to do what we need to do to get him." □

Colts parting ways with longtime standout WR Reggie Wayne

MICHAEL MAROT
AP Sports Writer

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — The Indianapolis Colts announced Friday that they would part ways with one of the greatest receivers in franchise history and allow Reggie Wayne will become an unrestricted free agent next week.

"Reggie is one of the greatest men to ever wear the horseshoe, and we have been blessed to watch him play for the past 14 years," owner Jim Irsay said in a statement. "When he first took the field with us in 2001, we knew this day would eventually arrive. That reality is one of the things that makes pro football such a tough busi-

ness."

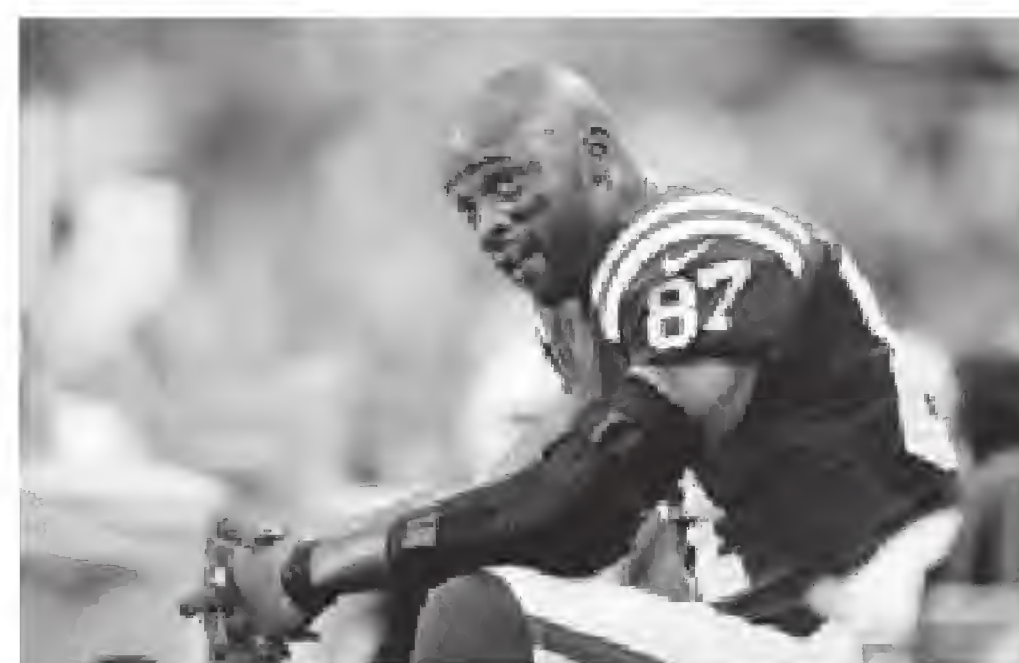
Despite having one of the most storied careers in franchise history, the 36-year-old Wayne was slowing down.

He missed the last nine games in 2013 with a torn anterior cruciate ligament in his right knee and was hobbled during the second half of last season with a torn left triceps. His record streak of 82 consecutive games with three or more catches ended in December. In Indy's three playoff games, Wayne had one catch for 12 yards.

Until getting hurt, the New Orleans native had produced incredible numbers. He's second in franchise history in recep-

tions (1,070), yards receiving (14,345), touchdown catches (80) and 100-yard games (43). Peyton Manning and Wayne formed the NFL's second-most prolific quarterback-receiver duos in completions (953) and yards (10,602), trailing only Manning and former teammate Marvin Harrison. He played in more games (211) and won more game (143) than any player in Colts' history, had four 100-catch seasons, eight 1,000-yard seasons, six Pro Bowl selections, 12 playoff appearances and one Super Bowl ring.

If Wayne doesn't play again, he will retire at No. 7 in NFL history in receptions and No. 8 all-time in yards



In this Nov. 16, 2014, file photo, Indianapolis Colts wide receiver Reggie Wayne sits on the bench after a pass intended for him was intercepted by the New England Patriots during the first half of an NFL football game in Indianapolis.

Associated Press

receiving.

He is leaving Indy in the same heartbreaking manner as Manning, Harrison and Dwight Freeney — without a retirement ceremony.

"He was that consistent leader," said Gary Brackett, Indy's defensive cap-

tain who was let go in the 2012 salary purge that also included Manning. "It's very rare in sports that your leader is also a Hall-of-Famer. Reggie was always a guy you could rely on. Guys gravitated to him because he did things the right way." □

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Google providing car insurance quotes in latest expansion

MICHAEL LIEDTKE

AP Technology Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) —

Google is helping California drivers shop for car insurance as part of a new service that could foreshadow the Internet company's latest attempt to shake up a long-established industry.

The feature unveiled Thursday compares auto insurance quotes from up to 14 carriers that are participating in the comparisons. The policies can then be bought online or through an agent. Google will receive a cut from the insurance sales.

The Mountain View, California, company says the size of the commissions won't influence how it ranks the price quotes.

Google Inc. plans to provide car insurance quotes in other states and sign up more carriers, too. The list of initial participants in California includes MetLife, Mercury Insurance and 21st Century Insurance. Some of the largest auto insurance providers, including State Farm, Allstate, Progressive and Geico, haven't joined Google's service.

Progressive and Allstate's esurance.com also provide auto insurance price comparisons.

The major auto insurers may be leery of Google, which has been using the power and profits from its dominant Internet search engine and other popular digital services to challenge the status quo in other industries.



This Jan. 3, 2013, file photo shows a Google sign at the company's headquarters in Mountain View, Calif.

Google already has designed a driverless car that is still being tested on a private track and is financing various projects in medical research.

It's also building high-speed Internet access networks in cities scattered across the U.S. and preparing to sell wireless data plans directly to consumers later this year.

Google is probably using its auto insurance comparison service to learn more about how the industry works so it can eventually underwrite and sell policies on its own, said Forrester Research analyst Ellen Carney.

"They are getting all the data that they need to do it," Carney said. "I think there is definitely more to come here."

A Google spokesman,

however, said the company has no plans to sell or underwrite insurance.

The debut of Google's insurance price comparison service validated a prediction that Carney made two months ago about

Google's intentions.

In a blog post, Google said it is just trying to give people a better understanding of financial products. The company already has been offering a tool that compares credit cards. □

Associated Press

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GM plans \$5B buyback, averts fight with hedge funds

TOM KRISHER
AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) — General Motors announced a \$5 billion stock buyback as part of a plan to return more cash to investors. In return, an activist shareholder decided to drop a potentially divisive bid for a seat on the company's board. The moves, announced Monday, are part of a deal with Harry Wilson, a former

member of the government task force that restructured GM coming out of its 2009 bankruptcy. Wilson, who represents four hedge funds which own about 2 percent of the company, had previously accused GM of hoarding cash to the detriment of shareholders and had sought an \$8 billion buyback and a board seat. But on Monday he said

he was impressed at how quickly GM's management responded, adding that the company agreed to just about everything the funds wanted. "We basically said thank you," Wilson said. GM had \$25.2 billion in cash at the end of last year, part of what it called a "fortress balance sheet" designed to withstand another financial crisis. Going forward the au-

tomaker plans to maintain a cash balance of \$20 billion and aims to keep its investment-grade credit rating. The share repurchase will begin immediately and finish before the end of 2016. Investors liked the announcement. GM shares rose 97 cents, or 2.7 percent, to \$37.51 in midday trading Monday. Talks with Wilson's group had been going on for about

two weeks, GM CEO Mary Barra said Monday. She said other major shareholders agreed with the buyback. She indicated that the buyback might have come without Wilson's prodding. "We were on a path to do this anyway," Barra said Monday. GM recently announced plans to boost its quarterly dividend by 20 percent to 36 cents. □

US indexes climb as stock market bull run turns six

STEVE ROTHWELL
AP Markets Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The stock market's bull run turned six on Monday. The anniversary was marked with modest gains. Stocks were rebounding from a big sell-off on Friday when the market slumped after an unexpectedly strong jobs report. The healthy hiring picture bolstered speculation that the Federal Reserve will raise its interest rates sooner than had previously been expected. On Monday, General Motors was among the biggest gainers after announcing a \$5 billion stock buyback plan. Deal news also gave the market a boost. Macerich, a real estate investment trust, jumped after bigger rival Simon Property made a hostile bid for the company. Stocks are becoming more volatile as investors try to assess when the Federal Reserve will start to raise interest rates and the impact that will have on the economy. The Fed has kept its

benchmark lending rate close to zero for six years, underpinning the run in stocks that stretches back to March, 2009. "Every time the market settles in on what the Fed will do, it gets spooked," said Jim Dunigan, chief investment officer at PNC Asset Management. "Today, that anxiety subsided a bit." The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 8.17 points, or 0.4 percent, to 2,079.43. The Dow Jones industrial average gained 138.94 points, or 0.8 percent, to 17,995.72. The Nasdaq composite climbed 15.07 points, or 0.3 percent, to 4,942.44. GM was among the biggest gainers on Monday. The automaker announced a plan to buy back its own stock. The move is part of a deal with Harry Wilson, an activist investor and a former member of the government task force that restructured GM coming out of its 2009 bankruptcy. In exchange, Wilson agreed to withdraw his hostile can-



Trader Neil Catania works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. The stock market's bull run turned six on Monday. The anniversary was marked with modest gains.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

didacy for the Detroit automaker's board of directors. The company's stock rose \$1.12, or 3.1 percent, to \$37.66. Macerich, a real estate investment trust that specializes in retail properties, was another winner. Its stock climbed \$6.04, or 7 percent, to \$92.76 after Simon Property made

a hostile bid of \$16 billion in cash and stock for the company. The S&P 500 has tripled since bottoming out at 676.53 six years ago in the wake of the housing market collapse and the Great Recession. The streak of gains is the fourth longest since the 1940s and has pushed the stock market

to record levels. Despite those sizeable gains, few analysts are calling an end to the bull market just yet. Scott Wren, a senior global equity strategist at the Wells Fargo Investment Institute, says investors should still take advantage of any sell-offs to add to their positions. □

Alcoa to buy RTI in \$1.5B deal, expand aerospace push

The Associated Press
WASHINGTON (AP) — Al-

coa is taking another step to bolster its stake in the aerospace industry with a \$1.5 billion deal to buy titanium supplier RTI International Metals. The New York-based company said Monday that it will buy the specialty metal products company in an all-stock deal. Alcoa said the aerospace and defense industries ac-

counted for 80 percent of Pittsburgh-based RTI's revenues last year. Alcoa has been shifting from its traditional role of mining and smelting aluminum to becoming a more diversified maker of lightweight metal and alloy products for aerospace, autos and other industries. It has benefited from demand for aluminum and other lightweight materials used to make planes more

fuel-efficient. Last week, Alcoa said it completed its acquisition of the German titanium and aluminum structural castings company Tital. That company's titanium castings are used in aircraft engines and frames. It also completed in the fourth quarter the purchase of Firth Rixson, which makes alloy parts for jet engines. For its latest deal, Alcoa

plans to trade slightly more than 2.8 Alcoa shares for each RTI share. That equals a value of \$41 per RTI share and represents a premium of 50 percent to RTI's Friday closing price of \$27.28. The \$1.5 billion deal value includes \$330 million in RTI cash and up to \$517 million in the company's convertible notes. Alcoa also said Friday that it will review 14 percent of

its global smelting capacity and 16 percent of its refining capacity for possible curtailment or divestiture. The company has curtailed, closed or sold 31 percent of its smelting capacity since 2007. Shares of RTI International Markets Inc. jumped 39 percent, or \$10.62, to \$37.90 in midday trading on Monday. Alcoa Inc. shares fell 85 cents, or 5.9 percent, to \$13.63. □

Pearls Before Congress



GAIL COLLINS

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Welcome to a whole new world. In Congress, that is. Not in the actual world. Control your expectations, for heaven's sake. You may have noticed that in an orgy of bipartisan cooperation, Congress passed a bill last week funding the Department of Homeland Security until the fall. Then, on Wednesday, the House passed a bipartisan bill funding the Amtrak system. And then everybody went away because it was, you know, going to snow.

But, still, bipartisan cooperation. It all started with the Senate. Republicans have been horrified to discover that whenever the now-minority Senate Democrats don't like something, they can simply filibuster, requiring 60 votes to move the bill forward. The Democrats always complained bitterly when the Republicans pulled that trick on them, but now they say the circumstances are totally different. The Democrats demanded that the homeland security funding bill be passed without any side assaults on President Barack Obama's immigration program. And Mitch McConnell, the majority leader, eventually had to give in.

In a way, you could look at last week's homeland security crisis as similar to the reported theft of a \$150,000 gown, covered entirely in pearls, which actress Lupita Nyong'o wore to the Academy Awards. Later, the disgruntled thief called TMZ and said he had left the dress in a hotel restroom out of disgust after he had two of the pearls appraised and discovered they were fake. So, good news is that the Department of Homeland Security is going to be funded. Also, that very attractive gown is back. The bad news is that we've now hit the point where keeping the government running sounds like a big victory. And the pearls weren't real.

Irony abounds. Who expected the Senate Republicans to be surprised when the Democrats started filibustering? Who knew dress thieves had such principled standards?

The Senate Democrats' success really ticked off the Republicans in the House, which nurtures a long and glorious tradition of hating the Senate, no matter who's in charge. (The Senate ignores the House completely.)

"If we're going to allow seven Democratic senators to decide what the agenda is ... then we might as well just give them the chairmanships, give them the leadership of the Senate," grouched Rep. Raúl Labrador.

Labrador is a leading member of a superconservative Republican caucus, which was created recently, with the apparent goal of bossing House Speaker John Boehner around. In its debut performance, the caucus managed to kill a bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security for just three weeks.

It is true that Labrador is the only member of Congress with the same name as a large, friendly retriever, but he can be really strict.

Pop Quiz: After conservative Republicans killed Boehner's bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security for three weeks, Boehner realized that:

A) Homeland security isn't actually all that big a deal.

B) His own right wing was completely crazy, and, if he wanted to get through the year, he was going to have to work with the Democrats.

C) "If ands and buts were candy and nuts, every day would be Christmas."

Yes! Boehner seems to have realized that he's going to have to work with the Democrats. Also, he said that thing about the candy and nuts, but nobody really knew what he was talking about.

Both the homeland security bill and the Amtrak funding were passed with unanimous Democratic support and huge Republican defections. The Amtrak bill, by the way, is more ambitious than your normal kicking-of-the-can-down-the-road legislation. There's money to actually improve the infrastructure, which is more than Congress has managed to come up with lately for highways and bridges. It also opens up the wonderful world of rail transit to pet dogs and cats, which I have to say is something most of us were not anticipating. The last bit seems to be the inspiration of a California Republican who owns a French bulldog that likes to travel. It is possible the program may be limited to small animals, but we will refrain making any jokes about aggrieved Labradors.

So this appears to be the path to the future: Senate Democrats will block anything they don't like, forcing the Senate majority leader, Mitch McConnell, to compromise. In the House, the Labradorians won't vote for any Senate compromises, so Boehner will need the Democrats to pass any legislation that could actually make it into law.

Here we go - four fiscal cliffs in the offing, and if the Republican majority wants to avoid falling off any of them, they'll have to join hands with the Democrats and tango. We won't get any big, dramatic reforms, but we might avoid any big dramatic disasters.

Plus poodles on Amtrak. Who knew? □

PEOPLE SAY
THE CONTRACT
KILLING OF
MY ARCH
CRITIC, BORIS
NEMTSOV,
HAS THE
KREMLIN'S
FINGER PRINTS
ALL OVER IT...



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GROSS LIBEL.
THEY ALWAYS
WEAR
GLOVES...

Tom Scott

The Temptation of Hillary



DAVID BROOKS

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Hillary Clinton's record is more moderate than the Democratic primary voter today. So it was always likely that she would move left as the primary season approached. It's now becoming clearer how she might do it. She might make a shift from what you might call human capital progressivism to redistributionist progressivism.

For many years, Democratic efforts to reduce inequality and lift middle-class wages were based on the theory that the key is to improve the skills of workers. Expand early education. Make college cheaper. Invest in worker training. Above all, increase the productivity of workers so they can compete.

But a growing number of populist progressives have been arguing that inequality is not mainly about education levels. They argue that trying to lift wages by improving skills is an "evasion." It's "whistling past the graveyard."

The real problem, some of them say, is concentrated political power. The oligarchs have rigged the game so that workers get squeezed. Others say the problem is stagnation. It's not that workers don't have skills; the private economy isn't generating jobs. Or it's about corporate power. Without stronger unions shareholders reap all the gains. People in this camp point out that inflation-adjusted wages for

college grads have been flat for the past 14 years. Education apparently hasn't lifted wages. The implication? Don't focus on education for the bottom 99 percent. Focus on spreading wealth from the top. Don't put human capital first. Put redistribution first. Over the past few months a stream of Democratic thinkers and politicians, including natural Clinton allies, have moved from the human capital emphasis to the redistributionist emphasis. (It's a matter of emphasis, not strictly either/or.) For Clinton herself, the appeal is obvious. The redistributionist agenda allows her to hit Wall Street and CEOs - all the targets that have become progressive bêtes noires. Unfortunately, this rising theory is wrong on substance and damaging in its effects.

It is true that wages for college grads have been flat this century, and that is troubling. But this is not true of people with post-college degrees, who are doing nicely. Moreover, as Lawrence Katz of Harvard points out, the argument that college doesn't pay is partly a product of a short-time horizon. Since 2000, the real incomes of the top 1 percent have declined slightly. If you limited your view to just those years, you'd conclude that there is no inequality problem, which is clearly not true.

On an individual level, getting more skills is the single best thing you can do to improve your wages. The economic rewards to education are at historic highs. Americans with a four-year college degree make 98 percent more per hour than people without one. The median college-educated worker will make half-a-million dollars more than a high-school-educated worker over a career after accounting for college costs. Research by Raj Chetty of Harvard and others suggests that having a really good teacher for only one year raises a child's cumulative lifetime income by \$80,000. "What I find destructive," says David Autor of the Massachu-

setts Institute of Technology, "is the message that if you don't get into the top 1 percent then you're out of the game. That's deeply, deeply incorrect."

Autor's own research shows that skills differences are four times more important than concentration of wealth in driving inequality. If we could magically confiscate and redistribute the above-average income gains that have gone to the top 1 percent since 1979, that would produce \$7,000 more per household per year for the bottom 99 percent. But if we could close the gap so that high-school-educated people had the skills of college-educated people, that would increase household income by \$28,000 per year.

Focusing on human capital is not whistling past the graveyard. Worker productivity is the main arena. No redistributionist measure will have the same long-term effect as good early-childhood education and better community colleges, or increasing the share of men capable of joining the labor force.

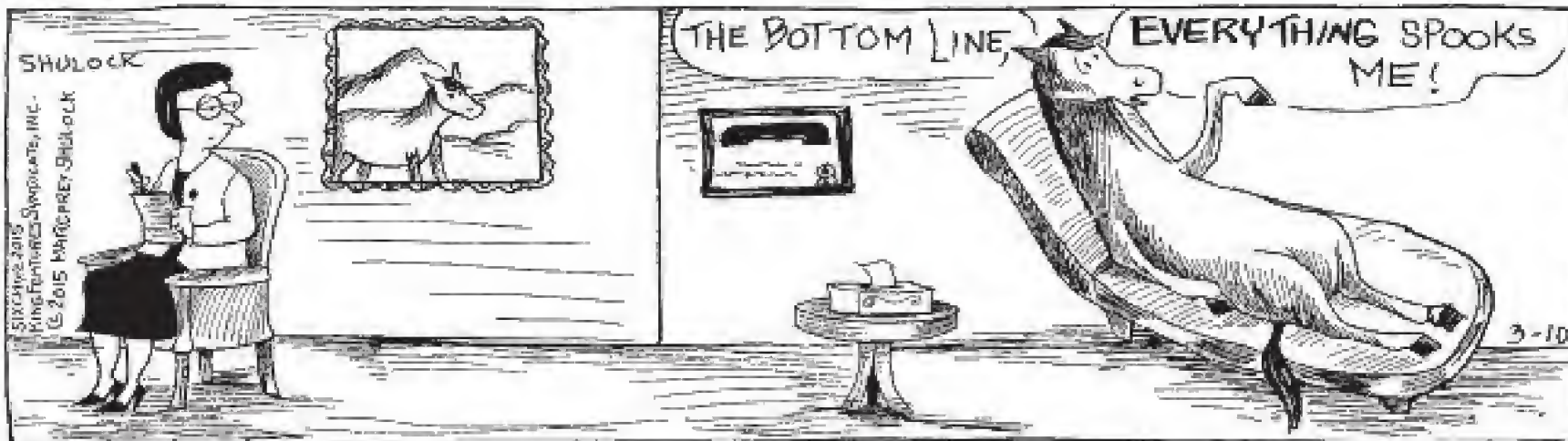
The redistributionists seem to believe that modern capitalism is fundamentally broken. That growth has permanently stagnated. That productivity should no longer be the focus because it doesn't lead to shared prosperity.

But their view is biased by temporary evidence from the recession. Right now, jobs are being created, wages are showing signs of life. Those who get more skills earn more money. Today's economy has challenges, but the traditional rules still apply. Increasing worker productivity is the key. Increasing incentives to risk and invest is essential. Shifting people into low-productivity government jobs is not the answer. It's clear why Clinton might want to talk redistribution. On substantive policy grounds, it would be destructive to do so. And, in the general election, voters respond to the uplifting and the unifying, not the combative and divisive. □

Mutts



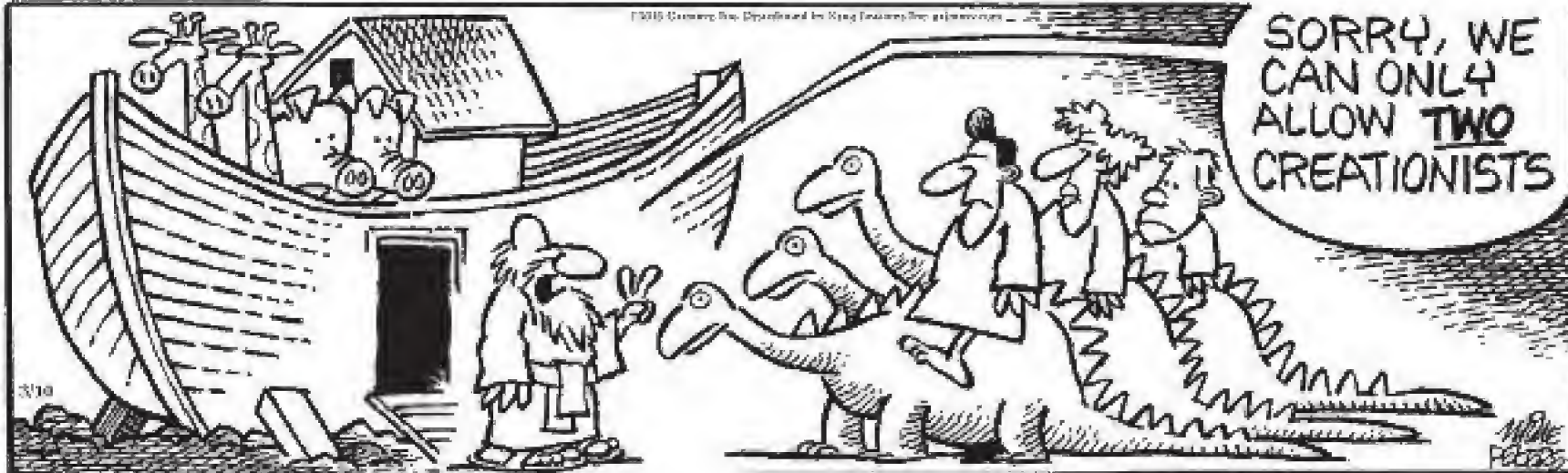
6 Chix



Blondie



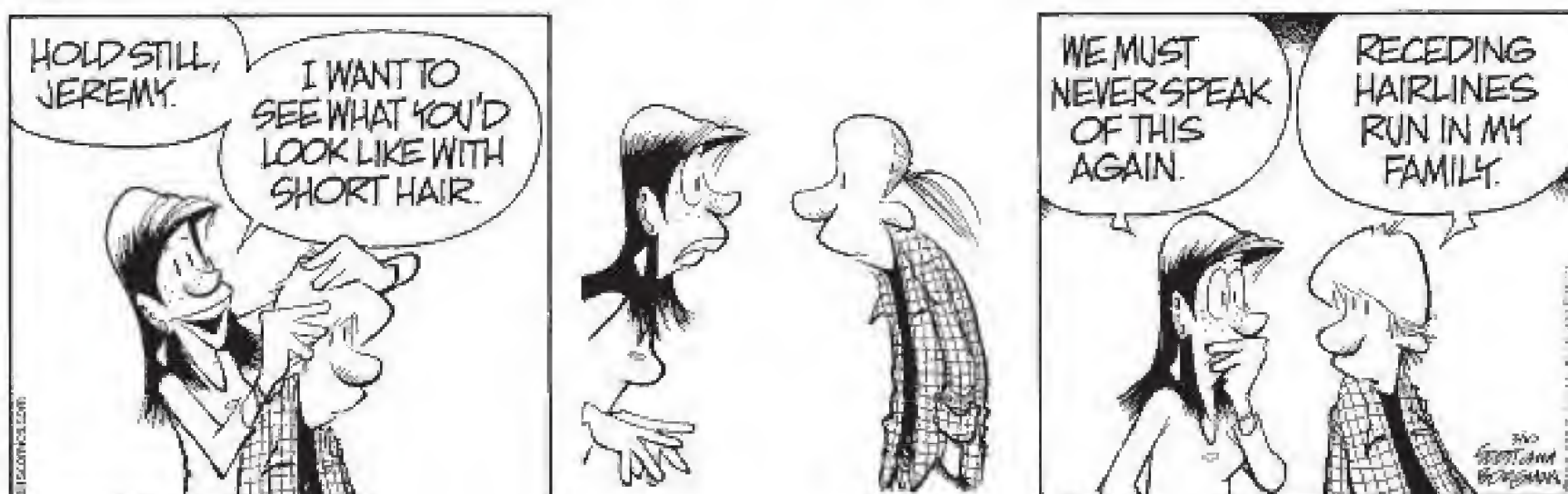
Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

3	8		6		7	9	
		6		1	4		
			2				
	6		5	3			
5		4				6	1
			1	6		4	
			5				
	3	9			8		
2	9		8		3	1	

Difficulty Level ★★

3/10

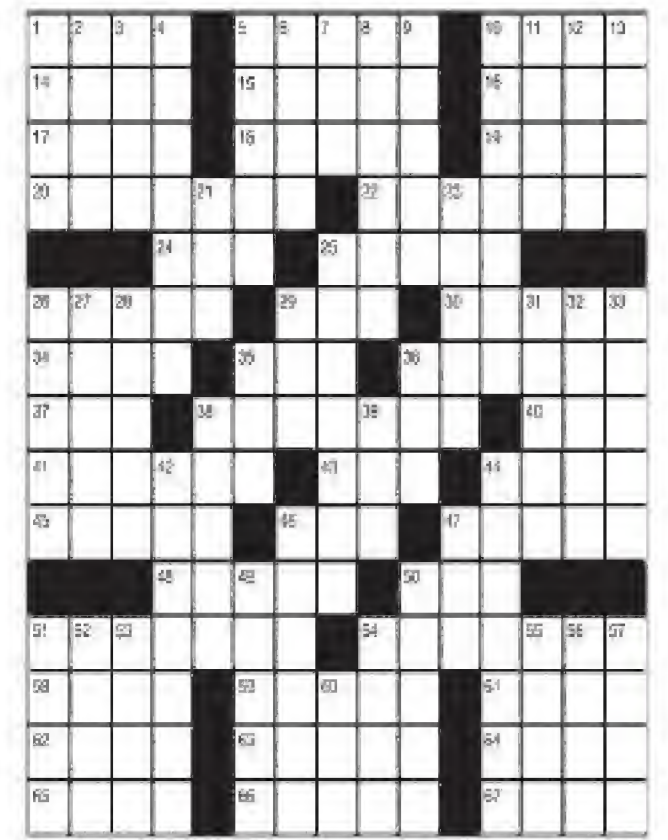
Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

4	3	8	9	2	1	7	5	6
6	9	1	4	7	5	3	8	2
2	7	5	8	6	3	9	1	4
3	4	9	5	1	2	6	7	8
8	6	7	3	4	9	1	2	5
1	5	2	6	8	7	4	9	3
7	8	3	1	5	6	2	4	9
9	1	4	2	3	8	5	6	7
5	2	6	7	9	4	8	3	1

ACROSS

- Apple products
- Pinnacles
- Bank machines for quick cash
- for; pity
- Holy person
- in on; visit
- Twelve months
- 1 of 5 senses
- Brief note
- Headache pill
- Spookiest
- ...through the night that ... flag was still ...
- In ...; tidy
- Certain petty officer
- Pupil transport
- Walked the floor
- Knocks
- Floor pad
- Deli purchase
- "... you kidding me?"
- Very remote
- Marsh
- Went off course
- Musician's stint
- Tubular pasta
- More peculiar
- Guys
- Religious belief
- Gives a hoot
- Split ... soup
- Installed new shoe bottoms
- Down-to-earth person
- "Magnum, P.I." setting
- Murphy or Van Hahn
- Climbs ...; mounts
- Abbr. in the names of some high schools
- Group of sheep
- ET saucers
- Finishes
- Looks for
- Plants



Created by Jacqueline E. Matthews

3/10/15

Monday's Puzzle Solved

COTTA	OFFA	CASS
AURED	AILS	OPEN
GLEAM	TAUT	WANE
EYESIGHT	HOARSE	
FERRS	SMARTER	
GONSAI	BOARD	
UNO	LEARN	SLIPS
STOP	FLOCKS	YORE
TONIC	LASER	TIE
LOVED	REVAMP	
SIRLOIN	MULE	
IDEALS	SAMENESS	
FANG	IRON	NICHE
THEE	TODD	TAHOE
SOWS	STAR	SLOPS

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3/10/15

DOWN

- Post Angelou
- Highest cards
- Fellow
- No-nonsense
- Up and about
- James or Scott
- Prefix for fit or informed
- Goes in
- Spirited horse
- Four-star naval officer
- Ask or sequoia
- May honorees
- Blamish
- Gallop
- Compensate
- Electricity glitches
- "Good for you!"
- Rowed
- Drive too fast
- Passing the ...; law school
- student's goal
- Forest home
- Be a drama queen
- Finger or toe
- Enraged
- Hang limply
- Wild
- Be victorious
- Regains money spent or lost
- Gung-ho
- Interfere
- Soothing drink
- Coral ridges
- Quick looks
- Thick cord
- Make a salary
- Outbuilding
- Actor Schroeder
- News, for short
- Store away
- Throw
- Female deer

Classifieds

DOCTOR ON DUTY
Oranjestad
Dr. Samuels

EMERGENCIA 911



POLIS	100
POLIS	581-1100
ORANJESTAD	582-4000
NOORD	587-0009
STA. CRUZ	585-4710
SAVANETA	584-7000
SAN NICOLAS	584-5000
FIRE DEPT.	115
FIRE DEPT.	582-1108
POLIS TIPLINE	11141
HOSPITAL	527-4000
AMBULANCE	582-1234
SAN NICOLAS	
AMBULANCE	584-5050

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24/7

Solar-power plane airborne on historic round-the-world trip

AYA BATRAWY

Associated Press

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — With its wings stretched wide to catch the sun's energy, a Swiss-made solar-powered aircraft took off from Abu Dhabi just after daybreak Monday in a historic first attempt to fly around the world without a drop of fossil fuel.

Solar Impulse founder André Borschberg was at the controls of the single-seat aircraft when it lumbered into the air at the Al Bateen Executive Airport. Borschberg will trade off piloting with Solar Impulse co-founder Bertrand Piccard during layovers on a 35,000-kilometer (21,700-mile) journey.

Some legs of the trip, such as over the Pacific and Atlantic oceans, will mean five days and five nights of flying solo. Both pilots have been training hard for this journey, which will span 25 flight days over five months before this Spruce Goose of renewable energy returns to Abu Dhabi in late July or August.

"It is also exciting because you know, you simulate, you calculate, you imagine, but there is nothing like testing and doing it in real," Borschberg said just hours before takeoff. "I am sure we are all confident and hopefully we will be able to see each other here in five months."

The Solar Impulse 2 aircraft,

a larger version of a single-seat prototype that first flew five years ago, has a wingspan of 72 meters (236 feet), larger than that of the Boeing 747. Built into the wings are 17,248 ultra-efficient solar cells that transfer solar energy to four electrical motors that power the plane's propellers. The solar cells also recharge four lithium poly-

typical passenger jet takes just one hour to make the same journey. Piccard says the best speed for the lightweight Si2 — made of carbon fiber — is at about 25 knots, or 45 kph (28 mph). Borschberg has been practicing yoga and Piccard self-hypnosis in order to calm their minds and manage fatigue during the long solo flights. They

Armbands placed underneath their suits will buzz if the plane isn't flying level. The plane also does not have a pressurized cockpit so Borschberg and Piccard will be able to feel the changes in temperature. The pilot's blood oxygen levels constantly will be monitored and sent back to ground control. The plane will reach an

tos from friends with him on the flight, though he declined to say what.

Piccard is no stranger to aviation feats. In 1999, he and another man succeeded in the first non-stop balloon circumnavigation of the world.

After two stops in India, the Si2 will head to China, where it will stay for a month until the days are longer to catch more of the sun's energy. It will also make stops in Myanmar, Hawaii, Phoenix, Arizona and New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport. The path across the Atlantic will depend on the weather and may include stops in southern Europe or Morocco.

Those curious can follow the aircraft on Solar Impulse's website and track its battery status, energy consumption, location and flight path, as well as how much the pilot has slept and how much food and water he has left. There is also a live feed of the plane's Monaco-based control room with occasional footage from the cockpit. Borschberg and Piccard say the flight is to make the world "confront the Conference on Climate Change of the United Nations, which will define the new Kyoto protocol in December 2015 in Paris." All countries are supposed to present targets for a new global climate agreement at the meeting. □



A Swiss solar-powered plane takes off at an airport in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, early Monday, March 9, 2015, marking the start of the first attempt to fly around the world without a drop of fuel.

Associated Press

mer batteries.

At around 2,300 kilograms (5,070 pounds), the Si2 weighs about as much as a minivan or mid-sized truck. An empty Boeing 747, in comparison, weighs some 180,000 kilograms (400,000 pounds).

The Si2 is heading first to nearby Muscat, Oman, where it will land after about 10 hours of flight. A

aim to rest a maximum of 20 minutes straight, repeating the naps 12 times over a 24-hour period. Goggles worn over the pilot's eyes will flash lights to wake him up.

Neither pilot will be able to stand in the cockpit while flying, but the seat reclines for stretching and its cushion can be removed for access to a toilet.

altitude of around 28,000 feet (8,500 meters) during the day to catch the sun's rays and at night dip to around 5,000 feet (1,500 meters) when flying over the ocean.

"You have to make the cockpit like your own house for a week in the air," Piccard said, telling The Associated Press he will keep a few small mementos

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PlayStation network debuts 'Powers' scripted series

FRAZIER MOORE

AP Television Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Ability does not imply accomplishment. And accomplishment is no prerequisite for fame.

This we know all too well from reality TV. (Hint: Snooki.) But today's viral sprawl of celebrity is explored in fresh fashion by a new series spawned from what some viewers might deem an unlikely source: comic books.

The series' 10-episode season is the latest blossoming of scripted TV fare from unexpected sources: Home base for "Powers" is the PlayStation network, where it arrives as that network's first original scripted series. Starting Tuesday, "Powers" will be free to PlayStation subscribers, with the first episode free to anyone for streaming through the PlayStation Store web site (a PlayStation console is not required). Subsequent episodes will be available for purchase by non-subscribers.

"Powers" is set in a two-tier society where ordinary humans must coexist with a superior class who, thanks to random distribution, are

endowed with any of a smorgasbord of superpowers which they employ for good or, just as often, for non-heroic purposes like crime, carousing or courting self-promotion.

Maintaining order among super-humans places a heavy burden on law enforcement.

"Powers" focuses on a pair of homicide detectives, Christian Walker and Deena Pilgrim, who investigate cases involving those people of disruptive privilege known as Powers.

Such police work would be a challenging, often thankless assignment for anyone, but it's all the more so for Walker: He used to be a superstar superhero, with a super-bad-guy reputation adding spice to his renown. But then his powers went away.

Today he's remembered, even jeered, for his by-gone spandex-clad identity, Diamond, as he plods through his workdays as a standard-issue gumshoe. The department's only cop who can identify with the Powers elite, he is haunted by memories of flying and other abilities he once pos-



This image provided by Sony Pictures Television shows Sharlto Copley, left, and Susan Heyward in a scene from "Powers." The series' 10-episode first season is the latest blossoming of scripted TV fare from unexpected sources.

Associated Press

sessed.

"Sometimes I forget I lost mine," says Walker (played by series star Sharlto Copley) in the premiere. "I can still feel 'em. Like a phantom limb."

But in the lingo of this star-centric society, Walker is a has-been, a washed-up idol, even as he demonstrates that heroes are by no means necessarily su-

per-heroes.

"What's more heroic than 'I lost my super powers, but now I'm gonna speak for those who don't have them'?" says Brian Michael Bendis, who co-created the "Powers" comic and is an executive producer of the series.

"That's massively heroic — probably the most heroic thing he's ever done!"

The first case for Walker and Pilgrim is investigating the death of a well-known superhero while tracking down Calista (Oleysa Rulin), a mysterious young woman who, like every wannabestar, is convinced she possesses something special (in her case, budding super powers) and will do whatever it takes to be discovered. □

'Simpsons' co-creator, philanthropist Sam Simon dies at 59

FRAZIER MOORE

AP Television Writer

Sam Simon, a co-creator of "The Simpsons" and animal-rights advocate who made a midlife career shift into philanthropy and channeled much of his personal fortune into social causes, has died.

Simon died Sunday at his home in Pacific Palisades, Calif., his agent, Andy Patman said. He was 59. He was diagnosed with advanced colon cancer in 2011.

After stints writing for "Taxi," "Cheers" and "The Tracey Ullman Show," Simon helped launch "The Simpsons." During his writing and producing career, he collected nine prime-time Emmy awards.

He left "The Simpsons" after its fourth season under a deal that rewarded him with ongoing royalties from the show, which is now in its 26th season.

He then established the Sam Simon Foundation, which rescues dogs from animal shelters and trains them to assist the disabled. He also donated to Mercy for Animals and the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, among other groups. In 2013, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals' Norfolk, Va., headquarters were christened the Sam Simon Center in recognition of his support for that organization.

Simon also funded a Los Angeles food bank.

In an interview with The Associated Press in 2013,

Simon voiced a desire to spend all of his money on charitable causes.

"I'm supporting the charities that I supported during my lifetime," he said, "and I want to continue to do that." Simon had grown up in Beverly Hills across the street from Groucho Marx, though his father was in the garment industry, not show business.

After turning his drawing talent into a job at an animation studio that made cartoons for kids, Simon submitted a script, on spec, to the ABC comedy "Taxi." His script was bought and produced, and Simon, in his 20s, was hired as a staff writer and soon rose to be the showrunner.

From there he joined a new NBC sitcom called



In this Feb. 1, 2014 file photo, Sam Simon arrives at the Writers Guild Awards, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

"Cheers," where he was staff writer for its defining first three seasons.

In 1987 he became a writer and executive producer on the Fox sketch-comedy series "The Tracey Ullman Show," where he was teamed alongside James L. Brooks, with whom he had worked on "Cheers" and "Taxi," and cartoonist

Matt Groening.

This trio became the founding fathers of "The Simpsons." On Monday, Groening saluted Simon's "phenomenal talents, sharp intelligence and sly sense of humor," while Brooks called him "truly one of the great ones."

Continued on next page



In this Jan. 27, 2015 file photo, actor Ken Jeong poses for a portrait during the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah.

Associated Press

Jeong says 'Hangover' role inspired by wife

DAVID BAUDER
AP Television Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Actor Ken Jeong says that much of the inspiration for his memorably angry Mr. Chow character in "The Hangover" movie was a reaction to his wife's fight against breast cancer at the time.

His small role in the 2009 comedy, which included leaping naked out of a car trunk to attack someone, was so wildly over-the-top that he won an MTV Movie Award for it.

Even after earning the role, however, he wasn't going to take it. He explained in a short film to accompany the upcoming PBS documentary, "Cancer: The Emperor of All Maladies," that he was caring for his wife, Tran Ho, and their one-year-old twins as she was undergoing chemotherapy.

"Tran encouraged me to do it," Jeong said in an interview. "She thought I was suffering from caregiver burnout."

He channeled his rage at his wife's plight into the character, he said. One monologue that wound up being cut from the film but used as a DVD outtake turned into a pure rant that Jeong sees now he was

doing to unburden himself. Jeong, who is Korean, slipped in some dialogue in Vietnamese purely as an inside joke for his wife, who is Vietnamese.

He accepted his MTV award with an emotional speech just after the couple learned that she was cancer-free for two years. Before he could talk about it to the media following the show, he slipped into an alley behind the theater and broke down crying.

Shortly after that, the Stand Up to Cancer organization asked him to do some volunteer work, and that included the online film that is being used to promote the PBS project, a film by Barak Goodman and Ken Burns that brings to life the Pulitzer Prize-winning book by Siddhartha Mukherjee. The three-part film airs on PBS March 30, 31 and April 1.

Tran Ho has now been cancer-free for six years.

"She's just a pillar of strength," Jeong said. "She's my biggest inspiration because she handled it with such grace and strength and class. Even if I wasn't married to her, I'd be in awe of her."

The video is being posted Monday on the site www.cancerfilms.org.

James Patterson launches grant program for libraries



In this May 3, 2006, file photo, author James Patterson contemplates a question during an interview at his home overlooking the Intracoastal Waterway in Palm Beach, Fla.

Associated Press

HILLEL ITALIE

AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Having handed out more than \$1 million to help independent bookstores, James Patterson is now sharing his wealth with some other vital, but often struggling institutions: School libraries.

The best-selling author announced Monday that he was donating \$1.25 million through a grant program administered with Scholastic Reading Club, a division of Scholastic, Inc. Libraries or supporters of libraries can seek donations \$1,000 to \$10,000. Scholastic will

match each donation with "Bonus Points" that can be used to purchase classroom materials. According to Patterson, requests can be for anything from fixing a computer system to paying for a school reading project.

"James Patterson is such a champion of books and reading for all children. We are thrilled to work with him to support school libraries, which are essential for thriving school communities," Judy Newman, president of Scholastic Reading Club, said in a statement.

Patterson, who has strong

memories of his weekly visits to libraries as a child, told the Associated Press during a recent interview that he wanted to "shine a light" on the problem of public schools with no libraries or underfunded libraries. In California, for instance there was just one certified school librarian for every 7,784 students in 2012-13. Chicago and Philadelphia are among the other cities that have sharply cut library staffing. More than 8,000 public schools nationwide did not have libraries in 2011-12, according to the National Center for Educational Statistics.

"A lot of schools also don't have as many books as they should have," said Patterson, adding that libraries were especially important for kids in households without books.

"There's a myth out there among some people that the kids are reading only digital books now. They're not."

The program will begin with a \$250,000 donation from Patterson, with the remaining \$1 million to be distributed throughout the year and additional funding likely in the future. □

Simon

Continued from previous page

He found so much outside the work to give him pleasure and left so much behind for others."

"The Simpsons" began as interstitial cartoon clips aired during the otherwise live-action "Ullman" show until, in 1989, it was spun off as a Fox half-hour of its own. Simon was named creative supervisor, and he hired the first writing staff as well as creating several Springfield citizens, including Mr. Burns, the cadaverous industrialist, and Dr. Hibbert, the buffoonish physician. The show — TV's first successful prime-time animated series since "The Flintstones" nearly three decades be-

fore — caught the public off-guard with its sassy but perceptive look at the culture and opened the door for a new television genre of animation geared toward adults.

"With 'The Simpsons,' people didn't know what they were gonna see," said Simon. "They didn't have a clue." The show was given time and free reign to flourish by the fledgling Fox network, which desperately needed a hit. "I don't think you get that sort of creative freedom with any broadcast shows today."

Simon left "The Simpsons" in 1994 owing to a strained relationship with Groening. Not only did he not play any subsequent role in the series, he claimed to never have

watched it after stepping away, even as his name remained in the weekly credits along with Groening's and Brooks'.

It was a lucrative departure. Simon's exit deal entitled him to royalties from "The Simpsons" that, more than a quarter-century later, annually paid Simon tens of millions of dollars. That annuity bankrolled the causes and alternative lifestyle (including amateur boxing and high-stakes poker) that increasingly he came to embrace. "I'm not sad," Simon declared in 2013, as he battled an illness that his doctors were saying might claim him within months. "I'm happy. I don't feel angry and bitter. I want to do whatever I can to survive." □



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